INTEREST DEPOSED, AND TRVTH RESTORED,

OR

A Word in Seaſon delivered in Two SERMONS:

The Firſt at St. *MARYES* in *OXFORD*, on the 24th of *Iuly*, 1659. being the time of the *Aſſizes*: as alſo of the *Fears* and *Groans* of the Nation in the threatned and expected *Ruine* of the *Laws*, *Miniſtery*, and *Univerſities*.

The other Preached lately before the Honourable Societie of *LINCOLNS-INN*.

By *ROBERT SOUTH*, Maſter of Arts, and Student of *CHRIST-CHVRCH*.

The ſecond Edition.

OXFORD,
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TO THE
RIGHT VVORSHIPFULL
EDWARD ATKINS,
Serjeant at Law, and formerly one of the
Justices of the *COMMON-PLEAS.*

Honoured Sir,

THough at first it was free, and in my choice, whether or no I should publish these Discourses, yet the Publication being once Resolved, the Dedication was not so indifferent; the Nature of the Subject, no less than the Obligations of the Author, styling them in a peculiar manner Yours: For since their drift is to carry the most Endangered, and Endangering Truth, above the Safest, when sinful, Interest; as a Practice upon grounds of Reason the most Generous, and of Christianity the most Religious; to whom rather should this Assertion repair as to a Patron, then to Him whom it has for an instance? Who in a case of eminent Competition chose Duty before Interest, and when the Judge grew inconsistent with the Justice, preferred ra-

ther to be Conſtant *to ſure Principles, than to an Unconſtant Government: And to retreat to an innocent and Honourable privacy, then to ſit and* Act iniquity by a Law; *and make your Age and Conſcience, (the one Venerable, the other Sacred) Drudges to the Tyranny of Fanatick, Perjured Uſurpers. The next attempt of this Diſcourſe, is a Defence of the Miniſtery, and that at ſuch a time when none owned them upon the Bench (for then you had quitted it) but when on the contrary we lived to hear one in the very face of the Univerſity, as it were in defiance of us and our Profeſſion, openly in his Charge defend the Quakers and Fanaticks, perſons not fit to be nam'd in ſuch Courts, but in an Indictment. But, Sir, in the Inſtructions I here preſumed to give to others, concerning what they ſhould doe, you may take a narrative of what you have done: what reſpected their Actions as a Rule or Admonition, applyed to yours is onely a Rehearſall. whoſe Zeal in aſſerting the Miniſteriall Cauſe is ſo generally known, ſo gratefully acknowledged, that I dare affirme, that in what I deliver, you read the words indeed of One, but the Thanks of All. Which affectionate Concernment of yours for them, ſeems to argue a Spirituall ſence, and experimentall Taſt of their Works, and that you have reaped as much from their Labours, as others have done from their Lands: For to me it ſeemed alwaies ſtrange, and next to Impoſſible, that a man converted by the Word Preached, ſhould ever hate and perſecute a Preacher. And ſince you have ſeverall times in*

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discourse declared your self for that Government in the Church, that is founded upon Scripture, Reason, Apostolicall Practice and antiquity, and (we are sure) the only one that can consist with the Present Government of State, I thought the latter Discourse also might fitly addresse it self to you, in the which you may read your Judgment, as in the other your Practice. And now since it has pleased Providence, at length to turn our Captivity, and answer persecuted Patience with the unexpected returns of Settlement; to remove our Rulers, and restore our Ruler; and not onely to make our Exactors righteousnesse, *but, what is better, to give us Righteousnesse instead of Exaction, and hopes of Religion to a Church worried with reformation; I believe upon a due and impartiall Reflexion on what is past, you now find no cause to Repent, that you never dipt your hands in the Bloody* High Courts of Justice, *properly so called onely by Antiphrasis; nor ever prostituted the Scarlet Robe to those Employments, in which you must have worne the Colour of your Sinne in the Badge of your Office. But notwithstanding all the Enticements of a Prosperous Villany, abhorred the Purchase, when the Price was Blood. So that now being priviledged by an happy Unconcernment in those Legall Murders, you may take a sweeter relish of your own Innocence, by beholding the misery of others Guilt, who being Guilty before God, and infamous before men, Obnoxious to Both, begin to find the first fruit of their sinne in the Universal scorn of all, their apparent Danger, and*

unlikely Remedy: which beginnings being at length consummated by the hand of Justice, the cry of Blood and Sacriledge will cease, mens doubts will be Satisfied, and Providence Absolved.

And thus, Sir, having presumed to honour my first Essayes in Divinity, by prefixing to them a Name, to which Divines are so much obliged. I should here in the close of this Address, contribute a Wish at least to your Happiness: But since we desire it not yet in another World, and your Enjoyments in this (according to the Standard of a Christian desire) are so compleat, that they require no Addition. I shall turn my Wishes into Gratulations, and congratulating their fulness only wish their Continuance: Praying that you may still possess, what you possess; and Doe what you Doe; that is reflect upon a clear, unblotted, acquitting Conscience, and feed upon the ineffable Comforts of the Memoriall of a Conquered temptation; without the danger of returning to the Tryall. And this (Sir) I account the greatest felicity that you can enjoy, and therefore the greatest that he can desire, who is

Yours in all Obsevance,

Ch. Ch. the 25th of *May*, 1660.

RO. SOUTH.

A Preface to the Reader.

THat being Conſcious to my ſelf of having in Diſcourſe ſo often condemned the Scribling of the preſent Age, I ſhould yet now own it by my Practiſe; eſpecially in that ſort of Writing in which ſeverall have gone before me, whom it is no glory to come behind, I find a neceſſity of beſpeaking the Readers acceptance with Excuſe, which yet I truſt I ſhall not manage ſo, as to make it only matter for another, but preſent him with Reaſon, as well as Apology. And firſt for the Publication of theſe two Diſcourſes, the one Preached in the time of our *Fears*, the other of our *Hopes*, and now both coming forth in the beginning of our *Fruition*, I ſhall not plead their having paſt the Teſt and Approbation of two of the moſt Judicious and Learned Auditories in the Nation, as ſuppoſing that was rather for the ſeaſonableneſs of the Truth, than any Elegance of the Compoſure, and more for the Venture than the Performance: Yet from whatſoever cauſe it came, I ſhall not vouch it as a reaſon of the Publication; ſince the ſame perſons may applaud the ſame thing from the Pulpit, that they ſhall afterwards hiſs coming from the Preſs; as could be eaſily inſtanced in the Forlorn Works of ſome unfortunate Divines: But much leſs was it the inſolent imprudent itch of appearing in Publick, that induced me to this, as being confident that theſe Diſcourſes, had more Hearers than they are like to find Readers; ſo that my preſent attempt may be rather termed an Edition than a Publication. But leaſt of all I plead the importunity of Friends that ſtale pretence for publiſhing ſo many ſcribles; ſuch as being by much importunity brought to the Preſs, need a greater to bring them to peruſall. But becauſe a ſordid, complying Spirit has been often charged upon the Univerſity, and (we muſt confeſs) a ſpice of it has appeared

red in many amongſt us, who have fouled, as well as diſturbed theſe fountains; I thought good to let our Detractors underſtand that in the very depth of Sectarian Barbariſme, when the profeſſed Enemies of the Church were the only Favorites of the State, and the very Pillars of it, the Vniverſities and miniſters were falling, there has been ſome, who durſt aſſert a rruth, though to the viſible danger of their preſent Enjoyments, and the utter extinction of their future Hopes; and for ſo deſperate a ſervice the moſt inconſiderable perſon was the fitteſt, whoſe ſucceſſe would have equally been an advantage, and whoſe ruin no loſſe. Nor can I deny but that I was deſirous to clear my ſelf from the undeſerved ſurmiſes, that ſome (whoſe good eſteem I have cauſe to value) have had of me; as if the injurious favours of ſome had not onely courted, but wonne me to a ſervile compliance, which I alwayes abhorred: But ſuch was my fate, that ſome while they were in Power injured me by Perſecution, when Declining, by their favour. The Vindication alſo of ſome things here delivered was no ſmall inducement to a Publication: For notwithſtanding the forementioned acceptance theſe Diſcourſes found, yet the former was attached by ſome ſevere Reprehenders, who according to the canting Dialect of *Wallingford* houſe (which forty years agoe would not have been underſtood, neither will it forty years hence) charged it as full of much *Wrath* aud *Darkneſs*; but it ſeems it was ſuch darkneſſe as the tyrannizing Egyptians began to *feele*: And I am ſure no more Wrath then was deſerved, and therefore very well beſtowed. However, Providence has encouraged it to ſee the Light, while ſome of its Reprehenders ſit in Darkneſſe. Yet ſince by Warrant from the Spirit it ſelf, *we may be angry, and ſinne not*, the ſharpneſſe of a Reprehenſion is to be aſcribed to the Nature of the thing that merits, not to the Temper of him that delivers it. And ſince it has pleaſed God to unſhackle men from *engagements*, Viſitations, and the Awe of Uſurpers, it is not to be expected, that Perjury, Blood, and Sacriledge, can be any longer Goſpellized into Acts of Piety, or high ſtrains of Evangelicall perfection, becauſe

becauſe indeed they goe much beyond the command. Yet that perſon, the late Oppreſſor of this Nation, and the known Father of Enthuſiaſts, in whom thoſe three Perfections eminently concurred, and who, we confeſſe, is glanced upon in what follows, euen him I have heard commended, as one, who notwithſtanding thoſe forementioned Infirmities (ſo called I conceive, becauſe they were the matter of his dayly Temptations) yet as to the main was truly pious, and to uſe his Encomiaſts very expreſſion, *had great Communion with god.* I ſuppoſe in the ſame ſenſe, that the Faithful, Innocent, and devout, hold Communion with the devill. Wherefore if by wrath was meant a Free (though at that time Dangerous) Animadverſion upon ſuch Spots of Chriſtianity, We own the Charge, and readily confeſſe, that the enſuing Diſcourſe was not Calculated for the ſoothing of Galled Conſciences, but really intended to Gall them more; and profeſſedly deſigned to reprove Avarice, Oppreſſion, pious Fraudes, Blaſphemies, and Perjuries, wayes not heretofore known of *holding Communion with God.* And as for Perſonall Reflexions, I know none ſuch ſpoken, but made ſuch by being Applyed: And if ſome proceeded to Application before I did, and from their Conſciouſneſſe inferred their Concernment, the Over-ruling ſentence of a Guilty Conſcience placing them under the dint of any of theſe Reproofs, I am not he that either can, or would Abſolve them: For as I have often ſaid, either they are not Guilty, & ſo they are not concerned in them, or Guilty, & ſo they deſerve them. But whereas it has been further objected, that I propoſed many doubts, which I left unanſwered; I am ſorry, that it was a fault, to think ſo honourably of my Auditory, as to eſteem it needleſſe: But it is not in my power to inform ſome mens Ignorance nor my deſire to gratifie their Humour: And whether this Plea proceeds from a tender Conſcience, or a tender head, I am not much concerned, but acquieſce fully in this, that for the Objections, thoſe that were Learned, could hear and anſwer them; thoſe that were not, could not apprehend them, both therefore equally without danger. And whereas I do

not now at leaſt in the Printing them, adde their ſolutions; I anſwer, that in regard I Profeſſe to publiſh the *Sermon* I then Preached, I ſhould not verify my word, ſhould I by ſuch Additions make it another. Having given an account of my deſign in the former Diſcourſe, and wiped off the Cenſures that for ſome time haue ſtuck upon it, I ſhall endeavour to prepare the Reader for a fair underſtanding of the Second, whcich being preached before many of the moſt conſiderable Members of the Houſe of Commons, had an Auditory ſuitable to its deſign. For in as much as an Eraſtian Antiminiſteriall Spirit has for many years acted moſt of the Nation, who would command the Service, without ſubmitting to the Diſcipline of the miniſters; And ſince Arguments from Piety or Scripture work little upon moſt of them, I thought it the beſt ſervice that could be done to the Eccleſiaſticall *Cauſe*, to make it appear that even a Politick conſideration would perſwade that, which was commanded upon a ſpiritual: By ſhewing how Religion is that alone that holds together the whole frame of Government; it being upheld it ſelf by the Encouragement, and Honour of the Clergy. So that whereas I enforce it chiefly by Arguments drawn from Civill Concernments, I would have none offended, ſince my intent is limited here, only to this reſpect, it being an Argument *ad hominem*; not the onely One that the *Subject* would afford, but that which was the moſt likely to reach the temper of the Times. And if I infer the neceſſity of Religion, and an Honourable Clergy from the Exigence of the Civil Intereſt, I ſuppoſe the neceſſity of it from Gods Command, and from the ſalvation of mens ſoules, is unqueſtionable: Wherefore I ſhall take the boldneſſe to entreat thoſe who ſhall think it worthy their Reading, before they Cenſure, to vouchſafe it at leaſt an attentive peruſal, in as much as it preſents to them ſome Truths, I think not often obſerved, I am ſure, not uſually delivered. For my own part, I cannot conceive how Religion can ſtand without a Miniſtery, nor the Miniſtery without its two *Eſſential* Props, Juriſdiction and Reſpect. It is the old, ſly, & undermining Plea, that Miniſters ought only

only to procure respect by their learning, and laborious, Upright life; other advantages belong not to them. But to answer this; besides, that late experience proves, that the most Pious, and the most Learned, have been the most persecuted and contemned, it is irrationall to think, that men ever yet made their Duty the measure of their Practice. And howsoever all ought, yet there are but very few who reverence Ministers for those Qualifications; but still those that do not, must be governed, or the Church ruined: therefore the Assistance of Secular supports must be taken in. Most therefore will confess Church Government Necessary, though they deny that Necessity to any determinate kind. But since Church Government in Generall sequestred from its severall kinds, is a meer Idea, I am apt to think that the determination of it was commanded together with the thing it self. And since only Particular, not Vniversal Natures fall under Practice, in as much as the Apostles did actually Govern the Church, it must needs be that it was by a certain determinate kind of Government: And then considering the Infallible Apostolick Spirit by which they were acted, I conceive their Practice and example was a Virtual Command: especially when the reason and grounds of it continue still the same. VVhat that Practice was, though there are many not obscure Traces of it in Scripture, yet I desire to gather it from the general Practise of the Church successively continued from their times: the most rationall Guide where the Scripture is silent, and the best comment where it is Obscure. And upon this Rule and Ground, I hold it more reasonable to Erre, than upon Fanatick Principles to stumble upon the Truth. Having thus shown my intent in these Sermons, and also the Rule, to the guidance of which I intend to resign my self, in whatsoever God shall hereafter call me either to Speak or Act as a Minister, I shall venture these Meditations into the world. What reception they may find I am ignorant, but not solicitous. But sure, of all persons, Ministers, Scholars, and especially those of the Vniversities, have little cause to censure, or reprehend me, who have freely ventured the Whole of my Small Advantages from them, in asserting them in a day of

the blackeſt danger and rebuke, that I truſt will ever befall the Church. However, I value not the taunts, the murmurs of any: I have learned by bearing, to contemn them. Frequent Endurance has bred an Apathy. But whatſoever men ſhall Mutter, Rail, or Declaim againſt theſe Writings, either out of a diſlike of the Subject here Treated of, or a perſonal hatred of my ſelf; yet in this I reſt ſatisfied, and aſſured, that the truth here ſpoken of, will ſtand, whatſoever becomes of him, that ſpoke it.

Math.

Math. 10. 33.

But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in Heaven.

AS the great comprehensive Gospel duty is the denyal of Self, so the grand Gospel sin that confronts it, is the denyal of Christ. These two are both the commanding and the Dividing Principles of all our Actions: For whosoever acts in opposition to one, does it alwaies in behalfe of the other. None ever opposed Christ, but it was to gratifie Self: None ever renounced the Interest of Self, but from a prevailing love to the Interest of Christ. The subject I have here pitched upon, may seem improper in these times, and in this place, where the number of Professors, and of men is the same; where the Cause and Interest of Christ has been so cryed up; and Christs Personall Reign and Kingdome so called for, and expected. But since it has been still Preached up, but Acted down; and dealt with, as the Eagle in the Fable did with the Oyster, carrying it up on high, that by letting it fall he might dash it in peices: I say, since Christ must Reign, but his Truths be made to

ſerve; I ſuppoſe it is but Reaſon, to diſtinguiſh between Profeſſion and Pretence; and to conclude, that mens preſent crying, *Haile King*, and *bending the knee* to Chriſt, are onely in order to his future Crucifixion.

For the diſcovery of the ſence of the words, I ſhall enquire into their occaſion. From the very beginning of the Chapter wee have Chriſt conſulting the propagation of the Goſpel; and in order to it (being the onely way that he knew to effect it) ſending forth a Miniſtery; and giving them a Commiſſion, together with Inſtructions for the Execution of it. He would have them fully acquainted with the Nature and Extent of their Office; and ſo he joynes Commiſſion with Inſtruction; by one he conveighs Power, by the other Knowledg. Suppoſing (I conceive) that upon ſuch an Undertaking, the more *Learned* his Miniſters were, they would prove never the leſs *faithful*. And thus having fitted them, and ſtript them of all manner of defence, *v.* 9. He ſends them forth amongſt wolves: A hard Expedition, you will ſay, to go amongſt wolves; but yet much harder to convert them into Sheep; and no leſs hard even to diſcerne ſome of them, poſſibly being under Sheeps cloathing; and ſo by the advantage of that dreſs, ſooner felt, than diſcovered: probably alſo ſuch as had both the properties of wolves, that is, they could whine and howl, as well as bite and devour. But that they might not goe altogether naked amongſt their Enemies, the one-

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ly Armour that Christ allows them, is Prudence and Innocence; *Be ye wise as Serpents, but harmlesse as Doves*, v.16. Weapons not at all offensive, yet most suitable to their Warfar, whose greatest Encounters were to be Exhortations, and whose only Conquest, Escape. Innocence is the best caution, and we may unite the expression, to be *wise as a Serpent*, is to be *harmless as a Dove*. Innocence is like polish'd Armour; it adorns, and it defends. In summe, he tells them, that the opposition they should meet with, was the greatest imaginable, from the 16. to the 26. v. but in the ensuing verses he promises them an equall proportion of assistance; which if it was not an Argument of force enough to out-weigh the fore-mentioned discouragments, he casts into the Balance, the promise of a Reward to such as should Execute, and of Punishment to such as should Neglect their Commission: The Reward in the former verse, *whosoever shall confesse me before men*, &c. the punishment in this, *But whosoever shall deny*. &c. As if by way of preoccupation he should have said, Well: here you see your Commission, this is your Duty, these are your Discouragements: never seek for shifts and evasions from worldly afflictions; this is your reward, if you perform it, this is your Doom if you decline it.

As for the Explication of the words they are clear and easie; and their Originals in the Greek are of single signification, without any ambiguity; and therefore

fore I ſhall not trouble you, by propoſing how they run in this, or in that Edition: or ſtraining for an interpretation where there is no difficultie, or a diſtinction where there is no difference. The onely Expoſition that J ſhall give of them, will be to compare them to other Parallel Scriptures, and peculiarly that in the 8 *Mark* 38. *Whoſoever therefore ſhall be aſhamed of me and my words, in this adulterous and ſinfull generation, of him alſo ſhall the Son of man be aſhamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy Angels.* Theſe words are a Comment upon my Text.

1. What is here in the Text called a *denying of Chriſt*, is there termed a *being aſhamed of him*, that is, in thoſe words the Cauſe is expreſſed, and here the Effect: for therefore we deny a thing, becauſe we are aſhamed of it. Firſt *Peter* is aſhamed of Chriſt, then he denyes him.

2. What is here termed a denying *of Chriſt*, is there called a being aſhamed of *Chriſt and his Words*: Chriſts truths are his ſecond Self. And he that offers contempt to a Kings letters or edicts, virtually affronts the King; it ſtrikes his words, but it rebounds upon his Perſon.

3. What is here ſaid *before men*, is there phraſed, in *this adulterous and ſinfull generation.* Theſe words import the hindrance of the duty enjoyned which therefore is here purpoſely enforced with a *non obſtante* to all oppoſition. The Term *Adulterous* I conceive may cheifly

chiefly relate to the Jewes who being nationally espoused to God by Covenant, every sinne of theirs was in a peculiar manner *spirituall Adultery.*

4. What is here said *I will deny him before my Father*, is there expressed: *I will be ashamed of him before my Father and his holy Angels*, that is when he shall come to Judgment, when Revenging Justice shall come in pomp, attended with the glorious Retinue of all the Host of Heaven. In short the sentence pronounced declares the Judgment, the solemnity of it the Terrour.

From the words, we may deduce these Observations.

1. *We shall find strong motives and temptations from men, to draw us to a deniall of Christ.*
2. *No Terrors, or Solicitations from men, though never so great can Warrant or Excuse such a deniall.*
3. *To deny Christs words, is to deny Christ.*

But since these Observations are rather implyed then expressed in the words, I shall wave them, and instead of deducing, a doctrine distinct from the words, prosecute the words themselves under this Doctrinall Paraphrase.

Whosoever shall deny, dis-owne or be ashamed of either the Person or truths of Jesus Christ for any fear or favour of man; shall with shame be disowned, and Eternally rejected by him at the dreadfull judgment of the great day,

The discussion of this shall lye in these things.

1. To shew how many wayes Christ and his truths may be denyed, and what is the denyall here cheifly intended.

2. To shew what are the causes that induce men to a deniall of Christ and his truths.

3. To shew how farre a man may consult his safety in time of persecution, without denying Christ.

4. To shew what is imported in Christs denying us before his Father in Heaven.

5. To apply all to the present Occasion.

But before I enter upon these I must breifly premise this, that though the Text and the Doctrine run peremptory and absolute, *Whosoever denyes Christ, shall assuredly be denyed by him*: yet still there is a *tacit* condition in the words supposed, unless repentance intervene. For this and many other Scriptures, though as to their formall termes they are Absolute, yet as to their sence they are Conditionall. God in mercy has so framed, and temper'd his word, that we have for the most part, a Reserve of mercy wrap'd up in a Curse. And the very first judgment that was pronounced upon fallen man, was with the allay of a promise. Whereſoever we find a Curse to the Guilty Expressed, in the same words mercy to the Penitent is still Understood. This premised, I come now to discusse the first thing, *viz.* How many wayes Christ and his truths may be denyed, *&c.* Here first in gene-

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rall I assert, that we may deny him in all those acts that are capable of being morally good or evill: those are the proper Scene in which we act our confessions or denyalls of him. Accordingly therefore all wayes of denying Christ I shall comprise under these three.

1. We may deny him and his truths by an Eroneous, Hereticall judgment. I know it is doubted whether a bare error in judgment can condemne: but since truths absolutely necessary to Salvation, are so clearly revealed, that we cannot erre in them, unless we be notoriously wanting to our selves; herein the fault of the judgment is resolved into a precedent default in the will: and so the case is put out of doubt. But here it may be replyed, are not truths of absolute and fundamentall necessity, very disputable: as the Deity of Christ, the Trinity of Persons? if they are not in themselves disputable, why are they so much disputed? Indeed I believe if we trace these disputes to their originall cause we shall find, that they never sprung from a reluctancy in Reason to embrace them. For this reason it self dictates as most rationall, to assent to any thing though seemingly contrary to Reason, if it is revealed by God, and we are certaine of the Revelation. These two supposed, these disputes must needs arise only from curiosity and singularity; and these are the faults of a diseased will. But some will further demand in behalf of these men, whether such as assent to every word in Scripture, for so will those

that deny the naturall deity of Christ and the Spirit; can be yet said in Doctrinals to deny Christ? to this I answer, since words abstracted from their proper sense & signification, loose the nature of words, & are only equivocally so called: in asmuch as the persons we speak of, take them thus; & derive the letter from Christ, but the signification from themselves, they cannot be said properly to assent so much as to the words of the Scripture. And so their case also is clear. But yet more fully to state the matter, how farre a deniall of Christ in beliefe and judgment is damnable: We will propose the question. Whether those that hold the fundamentalls of faith, may deny Christ damnably, in respect of those superstructures and consequences that arise from them? I answer in breif by fundamentall truths are understood, 1. Either such without the belief of which we cannot be saved, or, 2. such, the belief of which is sufficient to save: If the question be proposed of fundamentalls in this latter sense, it containes its own answer; for he that believes those truths, the belief of which is sufficient to save, the disbelief or deniall of their consequences cannot damne. But what and how many these fundamentalls are, it will then be agreed upon when all Sects, Opinions and Perswasions do unite and consent. 2 ly. If we speak of fundamentalls in the former sense, as they are only truths without which we cannot be saved: it is manifest that we may believe them, & yet be damned

ned for denying their consequences: for that which is only a Condition without which we cannot be saved, is not therefore a Cause sufficient to save: much more is required to the latter, then to the former. I conclude therefore, that to deny Christ in our judgment, will condemne, and this concernes the learned: Christ demands the homage of your understanding: he will have your *reason* bend to him, you must put your Heads under his feet. And we know that heretofore he who had the Leprosy in this part, was to be pronounced utterly unclean. A poysoned reason, an infected judgment is Christs greatest enemy. And an Error in the judgment, is like an impostume in the Head, which is alwayes noysome, and frequently mortall.

2. We may deny Christ verbally, and by orall expressions. Now our words are the interpreters of our hearts. The transcripts of the judgment with some further addition of good or evill. He that interprets usually inlarges. What our judgment whispers in secret, these proclaime upon the house top. To deny Christ in the former imports enmity, but in these open Defiance. Christs passion is renewed in both: he that misjudges of him, condemnes him, but he that blasphemes him spits in his face. Thus the Jewes & the Pharisees denyed Christ. *We know that this man is a sinner*, Joh. 9. 24. *and a deceiver*, Mat. 27. 63. *and he casts out divels, by the prince of the divels*, 2. Mat. 24.

And thus Christ is daily denyed, in many blasphemies printed & divulged, and many horrid Opinions vented against the truth. The Schooles dispute whether in moralls the external Action superadds any thing of good or evill to the internall elicit acts of the will: but certainly the enmity of our judgments is wrought up to an high pitch before it rages in an open deniall. And it is a signe that it is grown too bigge for the Heart, when it seeks for vent in our words. Blasphemy uttered is Error heightned with Impudence. It is sinne scorning a concealment, not only committed, but defended. He that denyes Christ in his judgment sins, but he that speakes his deniall, vouches and ownes his sinne: and so by publishing it, does what in him lies to make it Vniversall: and by writing it to establish it Eternall. There is another way of denying Christ with our Mouthes, which is Negative: that is when we doe not acknowledge and confesse him: but of this I shall have occasion to treat under the discussion of the third generall Head'

3. We may deny Christ in our Action and Practice, and these speak much louder then our tongues. To have an Orthodox belief, and a true Profession, concurring with a bad life, is only to deny Christ with a greater solemnity. Belief & Profession will speak thee a Christian but very faintly, when thy conversation proclaimes thee an infidell. Many while they have Preached Christ in their Sermons have read a lecture

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of Atheiſme in their practice. We have many here that ſpeak of Godlineſs, Mortification and Self-deniall; but if theſe are ſo, what means the Bleating of the Sheep, and the lowing of the Oxen, the noiſe of their ordinary ſins, and the cry of their great ones? If Godly, why do they wallow and ſteep in all carnalities of the world, under pretence of Chriſtian liberty? Why do they make Religion ridiculous by pretending to Prophecy, and when their Prophecies prove deluſions, why doe they Blaſpheme? If ſuch are ſelf-denyers, what means the griping, the prejudice, the covetouſneſſe, and the pluralities preached againſt, and retained, and the Arbitrary Government of many? When ſuch men Preach of ſelf-denyal and humility I cannot but think of *Seneca*, who praiſed Poverty, and that very ſafely, in the midſt of his great Riches and Gardens; and even exhorted the world to throw away their Gold, perhaps (as one well conjectures) that he might gather it up; So theſe deſire men to be humble, that they may domineer without oppoſition. But it is an eaſie matter to commend patience, when there is no danger of any tryall, to extoll humility in the midſt of honours, to *begin a Faſt after dinner*. But O how Chriſt will deal with ſuch perſons when he ſhall draw forth all their Actions bare and ſtript from this deceiving vaile of their heavenly ſpeeches! He will then ſay, it was not your ſad Countenance, nor your Hypocriticall groaning, by

which

which you did either confeſſe or honour me: but your Worldlineſs, your luxury, your ſiniſter partial dealing; theſe have denyed me, theſe have wounded me, theſe have gone to my heart: theſe have cauſed the weak to ſtumble, and the profane to blaſpheme: theſe have offended the one, and hardned the other. You have indeed ſpoke me fair, you have ſaluted me with your lips, but even then you betray'd me. Depart from me therefore you profeſſors of holineſs, but you workers of iniquity.

And thus having ſhewn the three wayes by which Chriſt may be denyed, it may now be demanded, which is the deniall here intended in the words.

Anſwer 1. I conceive if the words are taken as they were particularly and perſonally directed to the Apoſtles upon the occaſion of their miſſion to preach the Goſpel, ſo the denyall of him, was the not acknowledgment of the Deity or Godhead of Chriſt; and the reaſon to prove, that this was then Principally intended, is this; Becauſe this was the truth in thoſe dayes cheifly oppoſed, and moſt diſbelieved, as appeares, becauſe Chriſt and the Apoſtles did moſt earneſtly inculcate the belief of this, and accepted men upon the bare acknowledgment of this, and Baptiſme was adminiſtred to ſuch as did but profeſs this, 8 *Acts* 37,38. And indeed as this one Aphoriſme *Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God*, is Vertually and eminently the whole Goſpel, ſo to confeſs or deny it is vertually to embrace

embrace or reject the whole round and series of Gospell truths. For he that acknowledges Christ to be the sonne of God, by the same does consequentially acknowledge that he is to be believed and obeyed, in whatsoever he does enjoyne and deliver to the sonnes of men: and therefore that we are to repent and believe and rest upon him for salvation, and to deny our selves: and within the compass of this is included whatsoever is called Gospell.

As for the manner of our denying the deity of Christ here prohibited, I conceive it was by words and orall expressions verbally to deny, and dis-acknowledge it: This I ground upon these reasons.

1. Because it was such a deniall as *was before men*, and therefore consisted in open Profession, for a deniall in judgment and practice, as such, is not alwayes before men.

2. Because it was such a deniall or confession of him as would appear in Preaching: but this is managed in words and verball profession.

But now 2ly. If we take the words as they are a generall precept equally relating to all times, and to all persons, though delivered only upon a particular occasion to the Apostles (as I suppose they are to be understood) so I think they comprehend all the three wayes mentioned of confessing or denying Christ: but principally in respect of practice and that 1. Because by this he is most honoured or dishonoured. 2. Be-

cauſe without this the other two cannot ſave. 3. Becauſe thoſe who are ready enough to confeſs both in judgment and profeſſion, are for the moſt part very prone to deny him ſhamefully in their doings.

Paſs we now to a Second thing, to ſhew

What are the Cauſes inducing men to deny Chriſt in his truths. I ſhall propoſe Three.

1. The ſeeming ſuppoſed abſurdity of many truths: Vpon this foundation Hereſie alwayes builds. The Heathens derided the Chriſtians, that ſtill they required and preſſed belief, and well they might (ſay they) ſince the Articles of their Religion are ſo abſurd, that upon Principles of Science they can never winn aſſent. It is eaſy to draw it forth & demonſtrate, how upon this ſcore the cheif Hereſies that now are ſaid to trouble the Church, doe oppoſe and deny the moſt important truths in Divinity. As firſt, here the denyer of the Deity and ſatiſfaction of Chriſt. What (ſaies he) can the ſame Perſon be God and man? the Creature and the Creator? can we aſcribe ſuch attributes to the ſame thing, whereof one implyes a Negation and a Contradiction of the other? Can he be alſo Finite and Infinite, when to be finite is not to be infinite, and to be infinite not to be finite? And when we diſtinguiſh between the Perſon, and the Nature, was not that diſtinction an invention of the Schooles, ſavouring rather of Metaphyſicks, then Divinity? If we ſay that he muſt have bin God, becauſe he was

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to mediate between us & God, by the ſame reaſon they will reply, we ſhould need a Mediator between us and Chriſt, who is equally God, equally offended. Then for his ſatisfaction, they will demand to whom this ſatisfaction is paid? If to God, then God payes a Price to himſelf: and what is it elſe to require and need no ſatiſfaction, then for one to ſatisfie himſelf? Next comes in the Denyer of the Decrees and free grace of God. What (ſaies he) ſhall we exhort, admoniſh, and intreat the Saints to beware of falling away finally, and at the ſame time aſſert that it is impoſſible for them ſo to fall? what ſhall we erect two contradictory VVills in God, or place two contradictoryes in the ſame VVill: and make the VVill of his Purpoſe and Intention run counter to the VVill of his Approbation? Hear another concerning the Scripture and Juſtification. VVhat (ſaies the Romaniſt) relye in matters of faith upon a private Spirit? How doe you know this is the ſence of ſuch a Scripture? VVhy by the Spirit. But how will you try that Spirit to be of God? Why by the ſcripture: this he explodes as a circle, and ſo derides it. Then for Juſtification. How are you Juſtified by an imputed Righteouſneſs? Is it yours before it is imputed, or not: if not (as we muſt ſay) is this to be Juſtified, to have that accounted yours, that is not yours? But again, did you ever hear of any man made rich or wiſe by imputation? why then Righteous or Juſt? Now theſe ſeem-

ing Paradoxes, attending Goſpell truths, cauſe men of weak prejudiced intellectualls to deny them, and in them Chriſt, being aſhamed to owne faith ſo much (as they think) to the diſparagement of their Reaſon.

2. The Second thing cauſing men to deny the truths of Chriſt, is their Vnprofitableneſs. And no wonder if here men forſake the truth & aſſert intereſt. To be *pious* is the way to be *poor*. Truth ſtill gives its followers its own Badge and Livery, a deſpiſed nakedneſs. It is hard to maintaine the truth, but much harder to be maintained by it: could it ever yet feed, clothe, or defend its aſſertors? Did ever any man quench his thirſt, or ſatisfie his hunger with a Notion? Did ever any one live upon Propoſitions? The Teſtimony of *Brutus* concerning vertue, is the apprehenſion of moſt concerning truth: that it is a Name, but *lives* and *eſtates* are things, and therefore not to be thrown away upon Words. That we are neither to worſhip or cringe to any thing under the Deity is a truth too ſtrict for a *Naaman*: he can be content to worſhip the true God, but then it muſt be in the houſe of *Rimmon*: the reaſon was implyed in his condition, he was Captaine of the Hoſt, aud therefore he thought it reaſon good to bow to *Rimmon*, rather then endanger his place: better Bow, then Break. Indeed ſome times Providence caſts things ſo, that truth and intereſt lie the ſame way: and when it is

wrapt

wrapt up in this covering men can be content to follow it, to presse hard after it, but it is as we pursue some beasts only for their skins: take of the covering, & though men obtaine the truth, they would lament the loss of that. As *Jacob* wept and mourned over the torn Coat, when *Joseph* was alive. It is incredible to consider how interest outweighes truth. If a thing in it self be doubtfull, let it make for interest and it shall be raised at least into a Probable; and if a truth be certaine, and thwart interest, it will quickly fetch it down to but a Probability; nay if it does not carry with it an impregnable Evidence, it will goe near to debase it to a down right falsity. How much interest casts the Ballance in cases dubious, I could give sundry instances, let one suffice. And that concerning the unlawfullness of Usury. Most of the Learned men in the world successively both Heathen and Christian doe assert the taking of Use to be utterly unlawfull; yet the Divines of the Reformed Church beyond the Seas though most severe and rigid in other things, doe generally affirme it to be lawfull. That the case is doubtfull and may be disputed with plausible arguments on either side, we may well grant: But what then is the reason that makes these Divines so unanimously concurre in this opinion? Indeed I shall not affirme this to be the reason, but it may seem so to many: that they receive their Salaryes by way of pension, in present ready money, and so have no other

way to improve them; ſo that it may be ſuſpected, that the change of their ſalary, would be the ſtrongeſt argument to change their opinion. The truth is, Intereſt is the grand wheel and ſpring that moves the whole Vniverſe. Let Chriſt and Truth ſay what they will, if intereſt will have it, gain muſt be Godlineſs: If Enthuſiaſme is in requeſt, learning muſt be inconſiſtent with Grace. If pay grows ſhort, the Vniverſity Maintenance muſt be too great. Rather then *Pilate* will be counted *Ceſars* enemy, he will pronounce Chriſt innocent one hour, and condemn him the next. How Chriſt is made to truckle under the world, and how his truths are denyed and ſhuffled with for profit and pelf, the cleareſt proof would be by Induction and Example. But as it is the moſt clear, ſo here it would be the moſt unpleaſing: Wherefore I ſhall paſs this over, ſince the world is now ſo peccant upon this account, that I am afraid *Inſtances* would be miſtaken for *Invectives*.

3. The third Cauſe inducing men to deny Chriſt in his truths, is their apparent danger. To confeſs Chriſt, is the ready way to be caſt out of the Synagogue. The Church is a place of Graves as well as of Worſhip and profeſſion. To be reſolute in a Good cauſe is to bring upon our ſelves the puniſhments due to a Bad. Truth indeed is a profeſſion of the higheſt value, and therefore it muſt needs expoſe the owner to much danger. Chriſt is ſometimes pleaſed to make

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the profession of himself costly, and a man cannot buy the Truth but he must pay down his life and his dearest blood for it. Christianity marks a man out for destruction: and Christ sometimes chalks out such a way to Salvation, that shall verifie his own saying, *He that will save his life shall loose it.* The first ages of the Church had a more abundant experience of this: What *Paul* and the rest planted by their Preaching, they watered with their Blood. We know their usage was such as Christ foretold, he sent them to VVolves, and the common course then was *Christianos ad Leones.* For a man to give his name to Christianity in those dayes, was to list himself a Martyr, and to bid farewell not only to the pleasures but also to the hopes of this life. Neither was it a single death only that then attended this profession, but the Terrour and sharpness of it was redoubled in the manner and circumstance. They had Persecutors, whose invention was as great as their cruelty. VVit and Malice conspired to find out such tortures, such deaths, and those of such incredible anguish, that only the manner of dying was the punishment, Death it self the deliverance. To be a Martyr signifies only to witness the truth of Christ, but the witnessing of the truth was then so generally attended with this Event, that *Martyrdom* now signifies not only to witness, but to witness by death. The word besides its own signification importing their practice: And since Christians have been

been freed from Heathens, Christians themselves have turned persecutors. Since Rome from Heathen was turned Christian, it has improved its persecution into an Inquisition. Now when Christ and truth are upon these termes, that men cannot confesse him, but upon paine of death, the reason of their Apostacy and Deniall is clear, men will be wise and leave Truth and misery to such as love it, they are resolved to be Cunning, let others run the hazard of being Sincere. If they must be good at so high a rate, they know they may be safe at a cheaper. *Si negare sufficiat, quis erit Nocens?* If to deny Christ will save them, the truth shall never make them guilty. Let Christ and his flock ly open & exposed to all weather of Persecution, Foxes will be sure to have holes. And if it comes to this that they must either renounce Religion, deny and Blaspheme Christ, forfeit their lives to the fire or the sword, it is but inverting *Jobs* wives advice, *Curse God and live.*

3. We proceed now to the Third thing, which is to shew, how farre a man may consult his safety, *&c*

This he may doe Two Wayes.

1. By withdrawing his Person. Martyrdome is an Heroick act of faith. An Atcheivement beyond an Ordinary pitch of it: to you saies the *Spirit it is given to suffer.* 1 Phil. 29. It is a peculiar additionall gift: it is a distinguishing excellency of degree, not an essentiall consequent of its Nature. *Be ye harmlesse as Doves*

saies

saies Christ; and it is as Natural to them to take flight upon danger, as to be Innocent: Let every man throughly consult the temper of his faith, and weigh his courage with his fears, his weakness and his Resolutions together, and take the measure of both, and see which preponderates, and if his spirit faints, if his heart misgives and melts at the very thoughts of the fire, let him flye and secure his own soul, and Christs honour. *Non negat Christum fugiendo qui ideo fugit ne neget*: He does not deny Christ by flying, who therefore flyes that he may not deny him. Nay, he does not so much decline, as rather change his Martyrdome: He flyes from the flame, but repaires to a Desart; to poverty and hunger in a wilderness. Whereas if he would dispence with his conscience, & deny his Lord, or swallow down two or three Contradictory oaths, he should neither fear the one, nor be forced to the other.

2. By concealing his judgment. A man sometimes is no more bound to speak than to destroy himself; and as Nature abhors this, so Religion does not command that. In the times of the Primitive Church, when the Christians dwelt amongst Heathens, it is reported of a certain Mayd, how she came from her Fathers house, to one of the Tribunals of the Gentiles, and declared her self a Christian, spit in the Judges face, and so provoked him to cause her to be executed. But will any say that this was to confesse

Christ, or dye a Martyr? He that uncalled for, uncompelled, comes and proclaims a Persecuted Truth, for which he is sure to dye, onely dyes a Confessour of his own folly, and a Sacrifice to his own rashness. Martyrdome is stampt such onely by Gods command; and hee that ventures upon it without a Call, must endure it without a Reward: Christ will say, *who required this at your hands?* His Gospel does not dictate imprudence: No Evangelical Precept justles out that of a lawfull self-preservation. He therefore that thus throws himself upon the Sword, runs to Heaven before he is sent for: where though perhaps Christ may in mercy receive the man, yet he will be sure to disown the Martyr.

And thus much concerning those lawfull wayes of securing our selves in time of Persecution; not as if these were alwaies lawfull: For sometimes a man is bound to confesse Christ openly, though hee dyes for it; and to conceal a Truth is to deny it. But now to shew when it is our duty, and when unlawfull to take these courses, by some generall rule of a perpetual, never-failing truth, none ever would yet presume: For, as *Aristotle* saies, *We are not to expect Demonstrations in Ethicks, or Politicks, nor to build certain rules upon the contingency of humane Actions*: So, in as much as our flying from Persecution, our confessing, or concealing persecuted Truths, vary and change their very nature, according to different circumstances of time, place,

place, and persons, we cannot limit their Directions within any one universall Precept. You will say then, How shall we know when to confess, when to conceale a Truth? when to wait for, when to decline Persecution? Indeed the onely way that I think can be prescribed in this case, is to be earnest, and importunate with God in Prayer for special direction: And it is not to be imagined, that he who is both faithfull and mercifull, will leave a sincere soul in the dark upon such an occasion. But this I shall adde, that the Ministers of God are not to evade, or take refuge in any of these two forementioned wayes. They are publique persons: and good Shepheards must then chiefly stand close to the Flock when the wolf comes. For them to be silent in the Cause of Christ is to renounce it; and to fly, is to desert it. As for that place urged in favour of the contrary, in 23. *v. when they persecute you in this City flee into another*, it proves nothing; for the *Precept* was particular, & concerned onely the *Apostles*; & that but for that time in which they were then sent to the Jews, at which time Christ kept them as a reserve for the future: For when after his death they were indifferently sent both to Jews & Gentiles, we find not this clause in their Commission, but they were to signe the Truths they preached with their blood; as we know they actually did. And moreover, when Christ bids them, being persecuted in one City fly into another, it was not (as *Grotius* acutely observes) that

they might lye hid, or bee ſecure in that City, but that there they might Preach the Goſpel: So that their flight here was not to ſecure their Perſons, but to continue their buſineſs. I conclude therefore, that faithfull Miniſters are to ſtand and endure the brunt. A common ſouldier may Fly, when it is the duty of him that holds the ſtandard to dye upon the place. And we have abundant encouragement ſo to doe. Chriſt has ſeconded and ſweetned his command with his promiſe: Yea the thing it ſelf is not onely our duty, but our glory. And he that has done this work, has in the very work partly received his wages. And were it put to my choice, I think I ſhould chuſe rather with ſpitting and ſcorn to be tumbled into the duſt in blood, bearing witneſs to any known Truth of our dear Lord, now oppoſed by the Enthuſiaſts of the preſent Age, than by a denyal of thoſe Truths through Blood and Perjury wade to a Scepter, and Lord it in a Throne. And we need not doubt, but Truth, however oppreſſed, will have ſome followers, and at length prevaile. A Chriſt, though Crucified, will ariſe: And as it is in the 11 *Rev.* 3. *The Witneſſes will Propheſie, though it be in Sackcloth.*

Having thus diſpatched the third thing, I proceed to the fourth, which is to ſhew, what it is for Chriſt to deny us before his Father in Heaven. Hitherto we have treated of mens carriage to Chriſt in this world; now we will deſcribe his carriage to them in the other.

Theſe

These words clearly relate to the last Judgement, and they are a summary description of his proceeding with men at that day.

And here we will consider:

1. The Action it selfe, *He will deny them.*

2. The Circumstance of the Action, *He will deny them before his Father, and the holy Angels.*

1. Concerning the first; Christs denying us, is otherwise expressed in the 13 *Luke* 27. *I know you not.* To *know* in Scripture language is to Approve; and so not to know, is to Reject and condemne. Now who knows how many Woes are crowded into this one sentence, *I will deny him?* It is (to say no more) a compendious expression of Hell, an Eternity of Torments comprised in a word: it is Condemnation it self, and what is most of all, it is Condemnation from the mouth of a Saviour. O the inexpressible horror that will seize upon a poor soul when he stands arraigned at the Barre of Divine Justice! When he shall look about & see his Accuser, his Judg, the Witnesses all of them his remorsless Adversaries: The Law impleading, Mercy: and the Gospel upbraiding him, the Devill, his grand Accuser, drawing his Indictment; numbring his sinnes with the greatest exactness, and aggravating them with the cruellest bitterness, and Conscience, like a thousand Witnesses, attesting every Article, flying in his face, and rending his very heart. And then after all, Christ, from whom

only Mercy could be expected, owning the Accusation. It will be Hell enough to hear the sentence; the very Promulgation of the Punishment will be part of the Punishment, and anticipate the Execution. If *Peter* was so abashed when Christ gave him a look after his denyall; if there was so much dread in his looks when he stood as Prisoner, how much greater will it bee when he sits as a Judg? If it was so fearfull when he looked his Denyer into Repentance, what will it be when he shall look him into Destruction? Believe it when we shall hear an Accusation from an Advocate, our Eternall doome from our Intercessour, it will convince us that a Denyall of Christ is something more than a few transitory words: What trembling, what out-cries, what astonishment will there be upon the pronouncing this sentence! Every word will come upon the sinner like an Arrow striking through his reines; like Thunder that is heard, and consumes at the same instant. Yea it will be a Denyal with scorn, with taunting exprobrations; & to be miserable without commiseration, is the height of misery. He that falls below Pitty, can fall no lower. Could I give you a lively representation of guilt and horrour on this hand, & paint out eternall wrath, & decypher *eternall vengeance* on the other, then might I shew you the condition of a sinner hearing himself denyed by Christ: And for those whom Christ has denyed, it will be in vaine to appeale to the Father; unless wee can imagine

gine; that those whom Mercy has condemned, Justice will absolve.

2. For the Circumstance, *He will deny us before his Father, and the holy Angels.* As much as God is more glorious than man, so much is it more glorious to be confessed before him, than before men: And so much glory as there is in being confessed, so much dishonour there is in being denyed. If there could be any room for comfort after the sentence of damnation, it would be this, to be executed in secret, to perish Unobserved. As it is some allay to the infamy of him that dyed ignominiously, to be buried privately. But when a mans folly must be spread open before Angels, and all his baseness ript up before those pure Spirits, this will be a double Hell: to be thrust into utter Darkness, only to be punished by it, without the benefit of being concealed. When Christ shall compare himself, who was denyed, and the thing for which he was denyed together, and parallel his merits with a lust, and lay Eternity in the Ballance with a trifle, then the folly of the sinners choice shall be the greatest sting of his destruction. For a man shall not have the advantage of his Former Ignorance and Error, to approve his sinne: Things that appeared amiable by the light of this world, will appear of a different odious hue in the clear discoveries of the Next: As that which appears to be of this colour by a dimn candle, will be found to be of another look'd upon in the

the day. So when Christ shall have cleared up mens apprehensions about the value of things; he will propose that worthy Prize for which he was denyed: He will hold it up to open view, and call upon Men & Angels: Behold, look, here's the thing, here's that peice of dirt, that windy applause, that poor transitory pleasure, that contemptible danger, for which I was *dishonoured*, my Truths disowned, and for which life, eternity, and God himself was scorned and trampled upon by this sinner: Judg all the world, whether what he so despised in the other life, he deserves to enjoy in this? How will the condemned sinner then crawle forth, and appear in his filth and shame before that undefiled, Tribunall, like a Toade or a Snake in a Kings presence Chamber. Nothing so irksome as to have ones folly displaied before the Prudent: ones impurity before the Pure: And all this before that company surrounding him, from which he is neither able to look off, nor yet to look upon. A disgrace put upon a man in company is unsupportable: it is heightened according to the greatness, and multiplyed according to the number of the persons that hear it. And now as this circumstance [*before his Father*] fully speaks the *shame*, so also it speaks the danger of Christs then denying us. For when the accusation is heard, and the person stands convict, God is immediately lifting up his hand to inflict the eternall blow; and when Christ denyes to exhibite a ransome, to step between the stroak then coming, and the

the ſinner, it muſt inevitably fall upon him, and ſinke his guilty ſoul into that deep and bottomleſs gulph of endleſs perdition. This therefore is the ſumme of Chriſts denying us before his Father, *viz.* Unſupportable ſhame, unavoydable deſtruction.

I proceed now to the Vſes that may be drawn from the Truths delivered. And here (Right Honourable) not only the preſent occaſion, but even the words themſelves ſeem eminently to addreſſe an Exhortation to your Honours. As for others not to deny Chriſt, is openly to profeſs him; ſo for you who are inveſted with Authority, not to deny him, is to defend him. Know therefore, that Chriſt does not only deſire but demand your defence, and that in a double reſpect.

1. In reſpect of his Truth. 2. Of his Members.

1. He requires that you ſhould defend and confeſs him in his Truth. Hereſie is a Tare ſometimes not to be pulled up but by the Civill Magiſtrate. The word *Liberty of Conſcience*, is much abuſed for the defence of it, becauſe not well underſtood. Every man may have Liberty of conſcience to think and judge as he pleaſes, but not to vent what he pleaſe. The reaſon is, becauſe Conſcience bounding it ſelfe within the thoughts, is of private concernment, & the cognizance of theſe belong only to God: but when an opinion is publiſhed, it concerns all that hear it, and the publique is endamaged, and therefore becomes puniſhable

by the Magistrate, to whom the care of the publique is entrusted. But there is one truth that concerns both Ministery & Magistracy,& All; which is opposed by those who affirm,that *none ought to Govern upon the Earth but Christ in person*: Absurdly; as if the Powers that are, destroyed his; as if a Deputy were not consistent with a King; as if there were any Opposition in Subordination. They affirm also, that the Wicked have no right to their Estates, but onely the *Faithfull*, that is, *themselves*, ought to *possess the Earth*. And it is not to be questioned, but when they come to explaine this principle, by putting it into execution, there will be but few that have estates at present, but will be either found, or made Wicked. I shall not be so urgent to press you to confess Christ by asserting and owning the Truth contrary to this, since it does not only oppose Truth, but Propriety, and here to deny Christ, would be to deny your Selves.

2. Christ requires you to own and defend him in his Members; and amongst these, the chief of them, and such who most fall in your way, the Ministers; I say, that despised, abject, oppressed sort of men, the Ministers; whom the world would make Antichristian, and so deprive them of Heaven, and also strip them of that poor remainder of their Maintenance, and so allow them no portion upon the Earth. You may now spare that distinction of Scandalous Ministers, when it is even made Scandalous to be a Minister.

And

And as for their discouragement, in the Courts of the Law, I shall onely note this, that for these many years last past, it has been the constant observation of all, that if a Minister had a Cause depending in the Court, it was ten to one but it went against him. I cannot believe your Law justles out the Gospel; but if it be thus used to undermine Christ in his Servants, beware that such Judgments passed upon them, doe not fetch down Gods Judgments upon the Land; and that for such abuse of the Law, Christ does not in anger deprive both you and us of its Vse. (My Lords) I make no doubt, but you will meet with many suits in your course, in which the persons we speak of are concerned, as it is easie to Prognosticate from those many worthy Petitions preferred against them, for which the *well-affected Petitioners* will one day *receive but small Thanks* from *the Court of Heaven*. But however their Causes speed in your Tribunals, know that *Christ* himself will recognize them in a greater. And then what a different face will be put upon things! When the usurping, devouring *Nimrods* of the world shall be cast with scorn on the left hand: And Christ himself in that great Consistory shall daign to step down from his Throne, and single out a poor despised Minister, and as it were taking him by the hand, present him to, and openly thus confess him before, his Father. Father, here is a poor servant of mine, that for doing his duty impartially, for keeping a good

conſcience, and teſtifying my truths in an Hypocriticall pretending age, was wrong'd, trod upon, ſtript of all: Father, I will that there be now a diſtinction made, between ſuch as have owned & confeſſed me with the loſs of the world, and thoſe that have denyed, perſecuted and inſulted over me: It will be in vain then to come and creep for mercy: and ſay, Lord, when did we inſult over thee? when did we ſee thee in our Courts, and deſpiſed or oppreſſed thee? Chriſts reply will be then quick and ſharp: Verily in as much as you did it to one of theſe little, poor deſpiſed ones, ye did it unto Me.

2. Uſe is of information, to ſhew us the danger as well as the baſeneſs of a daſtardly Spirit; in aſſerting the intereſt and truth of Chriſt. Since Chriſt has made a Chriſtian courſe a Warfare, of all men living, a Coward is the moſt unfit to make a Chriſtian: whoſe infamy is not ſo great, but it is ſometimes leſs then his perill. A Coward does not allwayes ſcape with diſgrace, but ſometimes alſo he loſes his life: wherefore let all ſuch know, as can enlarge their conſciences like Hell, and call any ſinfull compliance ſubmiſſion, and ſtyle a Cowardly ſilence in Chriſts cauſe, diſcretion and prudence: I ſay let them know, that Chriſt will one day ſcorn them, and ſpit them with their policy and prudence into Hell; and then let them conſult how politick they were for a temporall Emolument, to throw away Eternity. All that cauſes men

to

to deny Christ, is either the Enjoyments, or the miseries of this life: but alas at the day of Judgment all these will expire; and as One well Observes, what are we the better for pleasure, or the worse for sorrow when it is past? but then sinne and guilt will be still fresh, and Heaven and Hell will be then yet to begin. If ever it was seasonable to preach Courage in the despised, abused cause of Christ, it is now, when his truths are Reformed into nothing, when the hands and hearts of his faithfull Ministers are weakned, & even broke, and his worship extirpated in a mockery, that his honour may be advanced. Well, to establish our hearts in duty, let us before hand propose to our selves the worst that can happen. Should God in his judgment suffer *England* to be transformed into a *Munster*. Should the faithfull be every where Massacred. Should the places of learning be demolished, and our Colledges reduced (not only as One in his Zeal would have it) to *Three*, but to none. Yet assuredly Hell is worse then all this, and is the portion of such as deny Christ: wherefore let our discouragements be what they will: losse of places, losse of Estates, los of life and Relations, yet still this sentence stands ratified in the Decretals of Heaven. *Cursed be that man, that for any of these, shall desert the truth, and deny his Lord.*

ECCLESIASTICALL

POLICY

THE

BEST POLICY:

OR

RELIGION

The best Reason of STATE:

In a SERMON delivered before the honourable Society of

LINCOLNS-INN.

By *RO. SOUTH*

OXFORD,

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1 King. 13. ch. 33, 34. v.

After this thing Jeroboam *returned not from his evill way, but made again of the lowest of the people Priests of the High places: whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the Priests of the High places.*

And this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, *even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the Earth.*

JEroboam (from the name of a person become the character of impiety) is reported to Posterity as eminent, or rather notorious, for two things; Usurpation of Government, and Innovation of Religion. 'Tis confessed, the former is expressly said to have been from God; but since God may Order, and dispose, what he does not Approve; and Use the wickedness of men while he forbids it; the design of the first cause does not excuse the malignity of the second: And therefore the advancement and Scepter of *Jeroboam* was in that Sence onely the work of God, in which it is said, 3 *Amos* 6. *that there is no evill in the*

City which the Lord has not done. But from his attempts upon the Civill Power, he proceeds to Innovate Gods Worſhip; and from the ſubjection of mens bodies and Eſtate: to enſlave their Conſciences, as knowing that true Religion is no friend to an unjuſt Title. Such was afterwards the way of *Mahomet*, to the Tyrant to joyne the Impoſtor, and what he had got by the Sword to confirm by the *Alcoran*; raiſing his empire upon two Pillars, Conqueſt, and inſpiration. *Jeroboam* being thus advanced, and thinking Policy the beſt Piety, though indeed in nothing ever more befooled; the nature of ſin being not onely to defile, but to infatuate: In the 11. chap. and the 27. v. he thus argues; *If this people goe up to doe Sacrifice in the houſe of the Lord at Jeruſalem, then ſhall the heart of this people turne again unto their Lord, even unto Rehoboam King of Judah, and they ſhall kill me, and goe again unto Rehoboam King of Judah.* As if hee ſhould have ſaid. The true Worſhip of God, and the converſe of thoſe that uſe it, diſpoſe men to a conſiderate lawfull Subjection. And therefore I muſt take another courſe: my Practice muſt not be better then my Title; what was won by Force muſt be continued by Deluſion. Thus ſin is uſually ſeconded with ſin: and a man ſeldome commits one ſinne to pleaſe, but he commits another to defend himſelf. As 'tis frequent for the Adulterer to commit murder, to conceal the ſhame of his Adultery. But let us ſee *Jeroboams* politick

tick procedure in the next ver. *Where upon the King took counsel, and made two Calves of Gold, and said unto them, it is too much for you to goe up to Jerusalem, behold thy Gods O Israel.* As if he had made such an Edict: *I Jeroboam, by the advice of my council, considering the great distance of the temple, and the great charges that poor people are put to in going thither; as also the intolerable burden of paying the first fruit, and tythes to the Priest, have considered of a way that may be more easie, and lesse burthensome to the people, as also more comfortable to the Priests themselves; and therefore strictly enjoyn, that none henceforth presume to repaire to the Temple at Jerusalem, especially since God is not tyed to any place or form of Worship; as also because the Devotion of men is apt to be clogged by such Ceremonies; therefore both for the ease of the people, as also for the advancement of Religion, we require and command, that all henceforth forbear going up to Jerusalem.* Questionless these, and such other Reasons the Impostor used to insinuate his devout Idolatry. And thus the Calves were set up, to which Oxen must be sacrificed; the God and the Sacrifice out of the same Herd. And because *Israel* was not to returne to *Egypt*, *Egypt* was brought back to them; that is, the Egyptian way of Worship, the *Apis*, or *Serapis*, which was nothing but the Image of a Calfe, or Oxe, as is clear from most Historians. Thus *Jeroboam* having procured his people gods, the next thing was to provide Priests. Hereupon to the Calves

he addes a commiſſion, for the *approving, trying*, and admitting the Raſcality and loweſt of the people to miniſter in that ſervice: ſuch as kept Cattel, with a little change of their Office, were admitted to make Oblations to them. And doubtleſs beſide the approbation of theſe, there was a Commiſſion alſo, to *eject* ſuch of the Prieſts and Levites of God, as being too Ceremoniouſly addicted to the Temple, would not ſerve *Jeroboam* before God, nor worſhip his Calves for their Gold, nor approve thoſe two glittering ſins for any reaſon of State whatſoever. Having now perfected Divine Worſhip, and prepared both Gods and Prieſts: In the next place, that he might the better teach his falſe Prieſt the way of their new Worſhip, he beginnes the Service himſelf, and ſo countenances by his example, what he had enjoyned by his command, in the 1. *v.* of this chapter, *And Jeroboam ſtood by the Altar to burne Incenſe.* Burning of Incenſe was then the Miniſterial Office amongſt them, as Preaching is now amongſt us. So that to repreſent you the nature of *Jeroboams* Action: It was, as if in a Chriſtian Nation the chief Governour ſhould authorize and encourage all the ſcumme and refuſe of the people to Preach, and call them to the Miniſtery by uſing to Preach, and invading the Miniſterial Function himſelf. But *Jeroboam* reſted not here, but while he was buſie in his work, and a Prophet immediately ſent by God declares againſt his

Idolatry

Idolatry, he endeavours to seize upon, and commit him, in the 4. *v.* *He held forth his hand from the Altar, and said, lay hold of him.* Thus we have him compleating his sinne, and by a strange Imposition of hands persecuting the *true* Prophets as wel as ordaining false. But it was a natural transition, and no wayes wonderful to see him that stood affronting God with false Incense in the right hand, persecute with the left, and abet the Idolatry of one Arme with the Violence of the other. Now if we lay all these things together, and consider the parts, rise, and degrees of his sinne, we shall find, that it was not for nothing, that the Spirit of God, so frequently, and bitterly in Scripture stigmatizes this person: For it represents him, first incroaching upon the Civil Government, thence changing that of the Church, debasing the Office that God had made sacred; introducing a false way of Worship, destroying the right. And in this we have a full and fair description of a foul thing; that is, of an Usurper, and an Impostor: or, to use one word more comprehensive than both, of *Jeroboam the sonne of Nebat who made Israel to sinne.*

From the Story and Practice of *Jeroboam* we might gather these Observations.

1. *That God sometimes punishes a* Notorious *sinne, by suffering the sinner to fall into a worse.*

Thus God punished the Rebellion of the Israelites by permitting them to fall into Idolatry.

2. *There is nothing ſo abſurd but may be obtruded upon the Vulgar under pretence of Religion.*

Certainly otherwiſe a Golden Calfe could never have been made either the Object, or the means of Divine Worſhip.

3. *Sin eſpecially that, of perverting Gods Worſhip, as it leaves a guilt upon the Soul, ſo it perpetuates a blot upon the Name.*

Hence nothing ſo frequent, as for the Spirit of God to expreſſe wicked, irreligious Kings, by comparing them to *Ahab* or *Jeroboam*. It being uſuall to make the firſt and moſt eminent in any kind, not onely the Standard for Compariſon, but alſo the Rule of Expreſſion.

But I ſhall inſiſt onely upon the words of the Text, and what ſhall be drawn from thence. There are two things in the words that may ſeem to require Explication.

1. *What is meant by the High places.*

2. *By the Conſecration of the Prieſts.*

1. Concerning the High places. The uſe of theſe in the Divine Worſhip was generall and ancient. And as *Dionyſius Voſſius* obſerves in his Notes upon *Moſes Maimonides*, the firſt way that was uſed, long before Temples were either built, or thought lawfull. The reaſon of this ſeemes to be, becauſe thoſe places did not ſhut up, or confine the Immenſity of God, as they thought an houſe did, and withall

all gave his Worſhippers a nearer approach to heaven by their Height. Hence we read that the Samaritanes worſhipped upon mount *Gerezim*, 4 *Joh.* 20. v. And *Samuel* went up to the High place to ſacrifice, 1*Sam.* 9. 14. And *Solomon* ſacrificed at the High place in *Gibeon*, 1 *King.* 3. 4. Yea the Temple it ſelfe was at length built upon a mount or High place, 2 *Chr.* 3. 1. You will ſay then, Why are theſe places condemned? I anſwer, that the uſe of them was not condemned, as abſolutely and alwaies unlawfull in it ſelfe; but onely after the temple was built, and that God had profeſſed to put his Name in that place, and no other: Therefore what was lawfull in the practice of *Samuel* and *Solomon* before the Temple was in being, was now deteſtable in *Jeroboam*, ſince it was conſtituted by God the onely place for his worſhip. To bring this Conſideration to the times of Chriſtianity. Becauſe the Apoſtles and Primitive Chriſtians preached in houſes, and had onely private meetings, in regard they were under Perſecution, and had no Churches; this cannot warrant the practice of thoſe now adaies, that preferre Houſes before Churches, and a Conventicle before the Congregation.

2. For the ſecond thing, which is the Conſecration of the Prieſts, it ſeemes to have been correſpondent to Ordination in the Chriſtian Church. Idolaters themſelves were not ſo farr gone, as to venture upon the Prieſthood without Conſecration and a Call. To

ſhew

ſhew all the ſolemnities of this would be tedious, and here unneceſſary: The Hebrew word which we render to Conſecrate, ſignifies *to fill the hand*, which indeed imports the manner ef Conſecration, which was done by filling the hand: for the Prieſt cut a piece of the ſacrifice, and put it into the hands of him that was to be conſecrated; by which Ceremony he received right to Sacrifice, and ſo became a Prieſt. As our Ordination in the Chriſtian Church, is ſaid to have been heretofore tranſacted by the Biſhops delivering of the Bible into the hands of him that was to be ordained, whereby he received power Miniſterially to diſpenſe the myſteries contained in it, and ſo was made a Preſbyter. Thus much briefly concerning Conſecration.

There remains nothing elſe to be explained in the words, I ſhall therefore now draw forth the ſenſe of them in theſe two Propoſitions,

1. *The ſureſt means to ſtrengthen, or the readieſt to ruin the Civill Power, is either to eſtabliſh, or deſtroy the Worſhip of God in the right exerciſe of Religion.*

2. *The next, and moſt effectuall way to deſtroy Religion, is to Embaſe the Teachers and Diſpenſers of it.*

Of both theſe in their order.

For the proſecution of the former we are to ſhew,

1. The truth of the aſſertion, that it is ſo.

2. The reaſon of the aſſertion why and whence it is ſo.

1. For

1. For the truth of it, it is abundantly evinced from all Records both of Divine and Profane Hiſtory, in which he that runs may read the ruine of the State in the deſtruction of the Church, and that not only portended by it as its Signe, but alſo inferred from it, as its Cauſe.

2. For the Reaſon of the point it may be drawne

1. From the Judiciall proceeding of God, the great King of Kings, and ſupreme Ruler of the Vniverſe; who for his commands is indeed carefull, but for his Worſhip Jealous. And therefore in States notoriouſly irreligious, by a ſecret and irreſiſtible power, countermands their deepeſt Projects, ſplits their Councells, and ſmites their moſt refined Policies with fruſtration and a curſe: being reſolved that the Kingdomes of the world ſhall fall down before him, either in his Adoration, or their own confuſion.

2. The reaſon of the doctrine may be drawn from the neceſſary dependence of the very Principles of government upon Religion. And this I ſhall purſue more fully. The great buſineſs of government is to procure obedience, and keep off diſobedience: the great ſprings upon which thoſe two move are Rewards and Puniſhments, anſwering the two ruling affections of mans mind, Hope and Fear. For ſince there is a naturall reluctancy between the Judgment and the Appetite, the former reſpecting what is honeſt, the latter what is pleaſing, which two qualifica-

tions ſeldome concurre in the ſame thing, and withall mans deſigne in every Action is delight: therefore to render things honeſt alſo practicable, they muſt be firſt repreſented deſireable; which cannot be but by propoſing honeſty cloathed with pleaſure; and ſince it preſents no pleaſure to the ſence, it muſt be fetcht from the apprehenſion of a future Reward. For queſtionleſs duty moves not ſo much upon command as promiſe. Now therefore that which propoſes the greateſt and moſt ſutable rewards to obedience, & the greateſt terrors & puniſhments to diſobedience, doubtleſs is the moſt likely to inforce one, and prevent the other. But it is Religion that does this, which to happineſs and miſery joynes Eternity. And theſe, ſuppoſing the Immortality of the ſoul, which Philoſophy indeed conjectures, but only Religion proves, or (which is as good) perſwades; I ſay theſe two things, eternall happineſs and eternall miſery, meeting with a perſwaſion that the ſoul is immortall, are without controverſy of all others, the firſt the moſt deſireable, and the latter the moſt horrible to humane apprehenſion. Were it not for theſe, Civill government were not able to ſtand before the prevailing ſwing of corrupt nature, which would know no Honeſty, but Advantage, no Duty but in Pleaſure, nor any law, but its own Will. Were not theſe frequently thundred into the underſtandings of men, the Magiſtrate might enact, order & proclaim, Proclamations

tions might be hung upon VValls and Posts, and there they might hang, seen and dispised, more like Malefactors, then Lawes: But when Religion binds them upon the Conscience, Conscience will either perswade or terrify men into their practicte. For put the case a man knew, and that upon sure grounds, that he might doe an advantagious murder or Robery, and not be discovered, what humane lawes could hinder him, which he knowes cannot inflict any penalty, where they can make no discovery? But Religion assures him, that no sin, though concealed from humane eyes, can either escape Gods sight in this world, or his vengeance in the other. Put the case also, that men looked upon Death without fear, in which sense it is nothing, or at most very little; ceasing while it is endured, and probably without Pain, for it seizes upon the Vitalls and benumms the senses, and where there is no sense, there can be no pain. I say, if while a man is acting his will towards sin, he should also thus act his reason, to despise death, where would be the terror of the Magistrate; who can neither threaten or inflict any more? Hence an old Malefactor in his Execution, at the Gallowes made no other confession but this; that he had very jocundly passed over his life in such courses, and he that would not, for fifty yeares pleasure, endure half an hours paine, deserved to dye a worse death then himself: questionless this man was not ignorant before, that there was such

things as lawes, assizes, and Gallowes; but had he considered, and believed the Terrors of another world, he might probably have found a fairer passage out of this. If there was not a Minister in every Parish, you would quickly find cause to encrease the number of Constables: And if the Churches were not imployed to be places to heare Gods law, there would be need of them, to be Prisons for the breakers of the laws of men. Hence 'tis observable that the tribe of *Levi*, had not one Place or Portion together like the rest of the Tribes: but because it was their office to dispence Religion, they were diffused over all the Tribes, that they might be continually preaching to the rest, their duty to God; which is the most effectuall way, to dispose them to Obedience to man: for he that truely feares God cannot despise the Magistrate. Yea so near is the connexion between the Civill state, and Religious, that heretofore, if you look upon well regulated, civilized, heathen Nations, you will find the Government and the Priesthood united in the same Person: *Anius Rex idem hominum, Phæbique Sacerdos. Virg.* 3. *Æn.* If under the true worship of God. *Melchisedech king of Salem and Priest of the most high God*, Heb. 7. 1. And afterwards *Moses* (whom as we acknowledge a Pious, so Atheists themselves will confess to have been a Wise Prince) he, when he took the *Kingly government* upon himself, by his own choice, seconded by Divine institution, vested the *Priesthood* in his

his brother *Aaron*, both whoſe concernments were ſo coupled, that if Nature had not, yet their Religious, nay their civill Intereſts, would have made them brothers.+ And it was once the deſigne of the Emperour of Germany, *Maximilian* the firſt, to have joyned the Popedome and the Empire together, and to have got himſelf choſe Pope, & by that meanes derived the Papacy to his ſucceeding Emperours. Had he effected it, doubtleſs there would not have been ſuch ſcuffles between him & the Biſhop of *Rome*; the civill Intereſt of the State would not have been undermined, by an Adverſe Intereſt, mannaged by the ſpecious & potent pretences of Religion. And to ſee even amongſt us, how theſe two are united, how the former is upheld by the latter: the Magiſtrate ſometimes cannot doe his own office dexterouſly, but by acting the Miniſter; hence it is, that Judges of Aſſizes find it neceſſary in their Charges, to uſe pathetical diſcourſes of Conſcience, & if it were not for the ſway of this, they would often loſe the beſt Evidence in the world againſt Malefactors, which is Confeſſion: for no man would confeſs and be Hanged here, but to avoid being Damned hereafter. Thus I have in generall ſhewn the utter inability of the Magiſtrate to attain the Ends of Government, without the Aid of Religion. But it may be here replyed, that many are not at at all moved with arguments drawn from hence, or with the happy or miſerable ſtate of the Soul after death, and there-

+ Moses himself also was a Priest, so we read, Moses & Aaron among his Priests. Ps.

fore this availes little to procure obedience, and consequently to advance Government. I answer by concession: that this is true of Epicures, Atheists, and some pretended Philosophers, who have stifled the Notions of a Deity, and the Souls immortality; but but the Unprepossessed on the one hand, and the well disposed on the other, who both together make much the major part of the world, are very apt to be affected with a due fear of these things: and Religion accomodating it self to the Generality, though not to every particular temper, sufficiently secures Government, in as much as that stands or falls according to the Behaviour of the multitude. And whatsoever Conscience makes the Generality obey, to that Prudence will make the rest conforme. Wherefore, having proved the dependance of Government upon Religion, I shall now demonstrate, That the safety of Government depends upon the Truth of Religion. False Religion is in its nature the greatest bane and destruction to Government in the World. The reason is, because whatsoever is False, is also Weak. *Ens* and *Verum* in Philosophy are the same: and so much as any Religion has of Falsity, it loses of strength and existence. Falsity gains Authority onely from Ignorance, and therefore is in danger to be known; for from Being false, the next immediate step is to be Known to be such. And what prejudice this would be to the Civill Government,

ment, is apparent, if men ſhould be awed into obedience, and affrighted from ſin byRewards and Puniſhments, propoſed to them in ſuch a Religion, which afterwards ſhould be detected, and found a meere falſitie, & Cheat? for if one part be but found to be falſe, it will make the whole ſuſpicious. And men will then not onely caſt off Obedience to the Civill Magiſtrate, but they will doe it with diſdaine and rage, that they have been deceived ſo long, and brought to doe that out of Conſcience which was impoſed upon them out of deſigne: For though men are often willingly deceived, yet ſtill it muſt be under an Opinion of being inſtructed; though they love the Deception, yet they mortally hate it under that appearance: Therefore it is no wayes ſafe for a Magiſtrate, who is to build his Dominion upon the Fears of men, to build thoſe fears upon a falſe Religion. 'Tis not to be doubted, but the abſurdity of *Jeroboams* Calves, made many *Iſraelites* turn ſubjects to *Rehoboams* Government, that they might be Proſelites to his Religion. Herein the Weakneſs of the Turkiſh Religion appears, that it urges Obedience upon the promiſe of ſuch abſurd Rewards, as that after death they ſhould have Palaces, Gardens, Beautifull Women, with all the Luxury that could be: as if thoſe things that were the occaſions, and incentives of ſin in this world, could be the rewards of Holineſs in the Other. Beſides many other inventions, falſe, and abſurd,

ſurd, that are like ſo many chinks and holes to diſcover the rotteneſs of the whole Fabrick, when God ſhall be pleaſed to give light to diſcover, and open their reaſons to diſcern them. But you will ſay, What Government more ſure and abſolute then the Turkiſh, and yet what Religion more falſe? Therefore certainly Government may ſtand ſure and ſtrong, be the Religion profeſſed never ſo abſurd. I anſwer that it may do ſo indeed by accident, through the ſtrange peculiar temper and groſs ignorance of a people; as we ſee it happen in the Turks, the beſt part of whoſe Policy, ſuppoſing the abſurdity of their Religion, is this, that they prohibit Schools of Learning; for this hinders Knowledge, and Diſputes, which ſuch a Religion would not bear. But ſuppoſe we, that the Learning of theſe Weſtern Nations were as great there as here, and the Alcoran as common to them as the Bible to us, that they might have free recourſe to ſearch and examine the flawes and follies of it, and withall that they were of as inquiſitive a temper as we: And who knows, but as there are viciſſitudes in the Government, ſo there may happen the ſame alſo in the temper of a Nation. If this ſhould come to paſs, where would be their Religion? And then let every one judge, whether the *Arcana imperii*, and *Religionis* would not fall together. They have begun to totter already; for, *Mahomet*, having promiſed to come and viſit his Followers, and

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late them to Paradice after a thouſand years; this being expired, many of the *Perſians* beganne to doubt and ſmell the cheat, till the mufti or cheif Prieſt told them, that it was a miſtake in the figure, and aſſured them, that upon more diligent ſurvey of the Records, hee found it two thouſand inſtead of one. When this is expired, perhaps they will not be able to renew the Fallacy. I ſay therefore, that though this Government continues firme in the exerciſe of of a falſe Religion, yet this is by accident, through the preſent genius of the people, which may change; but this does not prove, but that the Nature of ſuch a Religion (of which we onely now ſpeak) tends to ſubvert and betray the Civill Power. Hence *Machiavel* himſelf, in his Animadverſions upon *Livy*, makes it appear, that the Weakneſſe of *Italy*, which was once ſo ſtrong, was cauſed by the corrupt practiſes of the Papacy, in depraving, & miſuſing Religion to that purpoſe, which he, though himſelf a Papiſt, ſayes could not have hapned, had the Chriſtian Religion been kept in its firſt, and native ſimplicity. Thus much may ſuffice for the clearing of the firſt Propoſition.

The Inferences from hence are two.

1. If Government depends upon Religion, then this ſhews the peſtilential deſign of thoſe that attempt to disjoyn the Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Intereſts, ſetting the latter wholly out of the Tuition of

the former. But 'tis clear that the Fanaticks know no other ſtep to the Magiſtracy but through the ruin of the Miniſtry. There is a great Analogy between the body Natural and Politick; in which the Eccleſiaſtical or Spiritual part, juſtly ſupplyes the part of the ſoul; and the violent ſeparation of this from the other, does as certainly infer death and diſſolution, as the disjunction of the body and the ſoul in the Natural; for when this once departs, it leaves the Body of the Common-wealth a carcaſs, noyſom, and expoſed to be devoured by Birds of Prey. The Miniſtery will be one day found according to Chriſts word, *the ſalt of the earth*, the only thing that keeps Societies of men from ſtench and corruption. Theſe two Intereſts are of that nature, that 'tis to be feared they cannot be divided, but they will alſo prove oppoſite; and not reſting in a bare diverſity, quickly riſe into a Contrariety: Theſe two are to the State, what the Elements of Fire aud Water to the Body, which united compoſe, ſeparated deſtroy it. I am not of the Papiſts Opinion, who would make the Spiritual above the Civill State in power as well as dignity, but rather ſubject it to the Civill; yet thus much I dare affirm, that the Civill, which is ſuperiour, is upheld and kept in being by the Eccleſiaſticall and inferiour; as it is in a Building, where the upper part is ſupported by the lower; the Church reſembling the foundation, which indeed

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is the loweſt part, but the moſt conſiderable. The Magiſtracy cannot ſo much protect the Miniſtery, but the Miniſters may doe more in ſerving the Magiſtrate. A taſt of which truth you may take from the Holy War, to which how faſt and eagerly did men goe, when the Prieſts perſwaded them, that whoſoever dyed in that Expedition was a Martyr? Thoſe that will not be convinced what a help this is to the Magiſtracy, would find how conſiderable it is, if they ſhould chance to claſh, this would certainly eat out the other. For the Magiſtrate cannot urge obedience upon ſuch potent grounds, as the Miniſter, if ſo diſpoſed, can urge diſobedience. As for inſtance, if my Governour ſhould command me to doe a thing, or I muſt dye, or forfeit my Eſtate; and the Miniſter ſteps in, and tells me, that I offend God, and ruin my ſoul, if I obey that command, it's eaſie to ſee a greater force in this perſwaſion from the advantage of its ground. And if Divines once begin *to curſe Meros*, we ſhall ſee that *Levi* can uſe the Sword as well as *Simeon*; and although Miniſters doe not handle, yet they can employ it. This ſhewes the imprudence, as well as the danger of the Civil Magiſtrates exaſperating thoſe that can fire mens conſciences againſt him, and arme his Enemies with Religion: For I have read heretofore of ſome, that having conceived an irreconcileable hatred of the Civil Magiſtrate, prevailed with men ſo farre, that they

went to reſiſt him even out of conſcience, and a full perſwaſion and dread upon their ſpirits, that not to doe it were to deſert God, and conſequently to incurre damnation. Now when mens rage is both heightned and ſanctified by Conſcence, the War will be fierce; for what is done out of Conſcience, is done with the utmoſt Activity. And then *Campanella's* Speech to the King of *Spain* will be found true, *Religio ſemper vicit, præſertim Armata:* Which ſentence deſerves ſeriouſly to be conſidered by all Governours, and timely to be underſtood, leſt it comes to be felt.

2. If the ſafety of Government is founded upon the truth of Religion, then this ſhews the danger of any thing that may make even the true Religion ſuſpected to be falſe. To be falſe, and to be thought falſe, is all one in reſpect of men, who act not according to Truth, but Apprehenſion. As on the contrary, a falſe Religion, while apprehended true, has the force and efficacy of truth. Now there is nothing more apt to induce men to a ſuſpition of any Religion, than frequent innovation and change: For ſince the object of Religion, God, the ſubject of it, the ſoul of man, and the buſineſſe of it, Truth, is alwayes one and the ſame: Variety and Novelty is a juſt preſumption of Falſity: It argues ſickneſs and diſtemper in the minde, as well as in the body, when a man is continually turning and toſſing from one

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ſide to the other. The wiſe Romans ever dreaded the leaſt Innovation in Religion: Hence we find the advice of *Mecœnas* to *Auſtuſtus Cæſar* in *Dion Caſſius* in the 52 Book. where hee counſels him to deteſt, and perſecute all Innovators of Divine Worſhip, not onely as contemners of the Gods, but as the moſt pernicious diſturbers of the State: For when men venture to make changes in things ſacred, it argues great boldneſs with God, and this naturally imports little belief of him: which if the people once perceive, they will take their Creed alſo, not from the Magiſtrates Law, but his example. Hence in *England*, where Religion has been ſtill *Purifying*, and hereupon almoſt alwaies in the *Fire* and the *Furnace*; Atheiſts, and *Irreligious* perſons have took no ſmall advantage from our changes. For in King *Edward* the ſixts time, the Divine Worſhip was twice altered in two new Liturgies. In the firſt of Queen *Mary*, the Proteſtant Religion was perſecuted with Fire and Faggot, by Law and publick counſel, of the ſame perſons, who had ſo lately eſtabliſhed it. Upon the comiug in of Queen *Elizabeth*, Religion was changed again, and within a few daies the publick Council of the Nation made it death for a Prieſt to convert any man to that Religion, which before with ſo much eagerneſs of Zeal had been reſtored. So that it is obſerved by an Author, that in the ſpace of twelve years there were four changes about Re-

ligion made in *England*, and that by the publick Councill, and Authority of the Realm, which were more than were made by any Christian state throughout the world in fifteen hundred years before. Hence it is that the Enemies of God take occasion to blaspheme, and call our Religion Statisme: and now adding to the former, those many changes that have hapned since, I am afraid we shall never be able to claw off that name: Nor, though we may satisfie our own consciences in what we professe, to repell and cleare off the objections of the rational world about us, which not being interested in our changes as we are, will not judge of them as we judge: but debate them by impartiall Reason, by the Nature of the thing, the generall Practise of the Church; against which *New Lights*, *suddain Impulses of the Spirit*, *Extraordinary Calls*, will be but weak arguments to prove any thing but the madnesse of those that use them, and that the Church must needs wither, being *blasted* with *Inspiration*. We see therefore how fatall and ridiculous Innovations in the Church are: And indeed when Changes are so frequent, it is not properly Religion, but Fashion. This I think we may build upon as a sure ground, that where there is continuall Change, there is Uncertainty, and uncertainty in Religion, is a sufficient reason, if not to deny, yet to doubt of its Truth.

Thus much for the first Doctrine, I proceed now

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to the second, *viz. That the next, and most effectuall way to destroy Religion, is to Embase the Teachers and Dispencers of it.* in the handling of this I shall shew,

1. How the Dispensers of Religion, the Ministers of the word are embased or rendred vile.

2. How the Embasing or Vilifying them is a means to destroy Religion.

1. For the first of these, the Ministers and Dispencers of the Word are tendred base or vile two waies.

1. By devesting them of all Temporall Priviledges, and Advantages, as inconsistent with their Calling. It is strange since the Priests Office heretofore was alwaies Splendid, and almost Regall, that it is now looked upon as a peice of Religion, to make it low and sordid. So that the use of the word *Minister* is brought down to the signification of it, *a Servant*: for now to *serve* and to *minister servile* and *ministeriall*, are termes equivalent. But in the Old Testament the same word signifies a *Priest*, and a *Prince*, or *chief Ruler*: hence, though wee translate it *Priest of On*, 41 *Gen.* 45. and *Priest of Midian*, 3 *Exod.* 1. and *as it is with the people so with the Priest*, 24 *Isa.* 2. *Junius* and *Tremellius* render all these places not by *Sacerdos*, Priest, but by *Præses*, that is, a Prince, or at least a chief Councellour, or Minister of State. And it is strange, that the Name should be the same, when the Nature of the thing is so exceeding different. The like also may be observed in other Languages,

ges, that the moſt Illuſtrious Titles are derived from things Sacred, and belonging to the Worſhip of God. σεβαστὸς was the Title of the Chriſtian *Cæſars*, correſpondent to the Latine *Auguſtus*, and it is derived from the ſame word that σέβασμα, *cultus*, *res ſacra*, or *ſacrificium*. And it is uſuall in our Language to make *Sacred*, an Epithete to *Majeſty*: there was a certaine Royalty in things Sacred. Hence the Apoſtle, who I thinke was no Enemy to the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, ſpeaks of a *Royall Prieſthood*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. which ſhews at leaſt, that there is no contradiction or impiety in thoſe tearmes. In Old time, before the placing this office onely in the Line of *Aaron*, the Head of the Family, and the Firſt-borne offered Sacrifice for the reſt, that is, was their Prieſt. And we know that ſuch Rule and dignity belonged at firſt to the Maſters of Families, that they had *Jus vitæ & necis*, juriſdiction and power of Life and Death in their own Family, and from hence was derived the beginning of Kingly Government; a King being onely a Civill Head, or maſter of a Politick Family, the whole People; ſo that we ſee the ſame was the foundation of the Royall & Sacerdotall Dignity. As for the Dignity of this Office among the Jews, it is ſo pregnantly ſet forth in Holy Writ, that it is Vnqueſtionable. Kings and Prieſts are ſtill mentioned together, in the 2 *Lamen.* 6. *The Lord hath diſpiſed in the indignation of his Anger, the King and the Prieſt,*

5 Hoſea

5 Hosea 2, *Hear O Priests, and give ear O house of the King.* 17 Deut. 12. *And the man that does presumptuously, and will not harken unto the Priest that standeth there to minister before the Lord thy God, or unto the Judge, even that man shall dye.* Hence *Paul* together with a blow, received this Reprehension, *Act.* 5. 4. *Revilest thou Gods High Priest?* And *Paul* in the next verse does not defend himselfe, by pleading an extraordinary Motion of the Spirit, or that hee was sent to Reforme the Church, and might therefore lawfully vilifie the Priesthood, and all Sacred Orders; but in the 5. *v.* he makes an excuse, and that from Ignorance, the onely thing that could take away the fault; namely, *that he knew not that he was the High Priest*, and subjoines a reason which further advances the Truth here defended: *For it is written thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy people.* To Holy Writ we might adde the Testimony of *Josephus* of next Authority to it in things concerning the Jews, who in sundry places of his History, sets forth the Dignity of the Priests, and in his second Book against *Appion* the Grammarian, he has these words, πάντων δὲ ἀμφισβητουμένων δίκας οἱ ἱερεῖς ἐτάχθησαν, the Priests were constituted Judges of all doubtfull causes. Hence *Justine* also in his 36 Booke has this, *Semper apud Judæos mos fuit, ut Eosdem Reges & Sacerdotes haberent*: though this is false, that they were alwaies so, yet argues that they were so frequently, and that

the distance between them was not great. To the Jews we may joyne the Egyptians, the first Masters of Learning and Philosophy. *Synesius* in his 57 Epist. having shewen the generall Practise of Antiquity, ὁ παλαιὸς χρόνος ἅπασι τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἐχρήσατο καὶ πρέσι, gives an instance in the Jews and Egyptians, who for many Ages, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἱερέως ἐβασιλεύοντο, had no other Kings but Priests. Next we may take a view of the Practise of the Romans: *Numa Pompilius*, that civilized the fierce *Romans*, is reported in the 1. Book of *Livy*, sometimes to have performed the Priests Office himself. *Tum Sacerdotibus creandis animum adjecit, quanquam ipse plurima sacra obibat*, but when he made Priests, hee gave them a dignity almost the same with himself. And this honour continued together with the Valour and Prudence of that Nation. For the Succes of the Romans did not extirpate their Religion. The Colledge of the Priests being in many things exempted even from the Jurisdiction of the Senate, afterwards the Supream Power. Hence *Juvenal* in his 2. Sat. mentions the Priesthood of *Mars*, as one of the most Honourable places in *Rome*. And *Jul. Cæsar* who was chose Priest in his minority, thought it not below him to continue the same Office when he was Created ablolute Governour of *Rome* under the name of Perpetuall Dictator. Adde to these the Practise of the *Gaules* mentioned by *Cæsar* in his 6. Book *de Bello Gallico*, where he saies of the

Druides,

Druides, who were their Priests; that they did judge *de omnibus fere controversiis publicis privatisque*. See also *Homer* in the 1 Book of his *Iliads* representing *Chryses* the Priest of *Apollo* with his Golden Scepter, as well as the Golden Censer. But why have I produced all these examples of the Heathens? Is it to make these a ground of our Imitation? No, but to shew, that the giving honour to the Priesthood, was a custome Universall amongst all civilized Nations: And whatsoever is Universall, is also Naturall, as not being founded upon compact, or the particular humours of men, but flowing from the Native results of Reason: and that which is Natural, neither does nor can oppose Religion. Bnt you will say, this concernes not us, who have an expresse Rule and Word revealed. Christ was himself poor and despised, and withall has instituted such a Ministery. To the first part of this plea I answer; That Christ came to suffer, yet the sufferings and miseries of Christ, doe not oblige all Christians to undertake the like. For the second, That the Ministery of Christ was low, and despised by his institution, I utterly deny. It was so indeed by the malice and persecution of the Heathen Princes, but what does this argue or inferre for a low, dejected Ministery in a flourishing State, which professes to encourage Christianity? But to dash this cavill, read but the Practise of Christian Emperours and Kings all along down from the time of *Constantine*;

tine, in what reſpect, what honour and ſplendour they treated the Miniſters, and then let our adverſaries produce their puny, pittifull Arguments for the contrary, againſt the generall, clear, undoubted vogue and current of all antiquity. As for two or three little Countries about us, the Learned and impartiall will not value their practice; in one of which places the Miniſter has been ſeen, for meer want to mend ſhooes on the Saturday, and been heard to preach on the Sunday. In the other place, ſtating the ſeverall orders of the Citizens, they place their Miniſters after their Apothecaries: that is, the Phyſician of the Soul after the Drugſter of the Body: a fit practice for thoſe, who if they were to ranck Things as well as Perſons, would place their Religion after their Trade.

And thus much concerning the firſt way of Debaſing the Miniſters and Miniſtery.

2. The ſecond way is by admitting Ignorant, Sordid, Illiterate perſons to this Function. This is to give the Royall ſtamp to a piece of Lead. I confeſſe, God has no need of any mans Parts, or Learning; but certainly then, he has much leſſe need of his Ignorance, and ill Behaviour. It is a ſad thing when all other Employments ſhall empty themſelves into the Miniſtery: When men ſhall repair to it, not for Preferment, but Refuge; like Malefactors, flying to the Altar onely to ſave their lives; or like thoſe of

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Ely's Race, 1 *Sam.* 2. 36. that should come crouching, and seek to be put into the Priests Office, that they might eat a piece of Bread. Heretofore there was required splendour of Parentage to recommend any one to the Priesthood, as *Josephus* witnesses in a Treatise that he wrote of his owne Life; where he sayes, to have right to deale in things Sacred, was amongst them accounted an argument of a Noble and Illustrious Descent. God would not accept the Offalls of other Professions. Doubtlesse many rejected Christ, upon this thought, that he was the Carpenters Sonne, who would have embraced him, had they known him to have been the Sonne of *David*. The preferring undeserving persons to this great service, was eminently *Jeroboams* Sin; and how *Jeroboams* practise and offence has been continued amongst us in another guise, is not unknown: For has not Learning unqualified men for approbation to the Ministery? Has not parts and Abilities been reputed Enemies to Grace, and Qualities no wayes Ministeriall? While Friends, Faction, Well-meaning, and little Understanding, have been Accomplishments beyond Study & the University; and to falsifie a story of Conversion, beyond pertinent Answers and clear Resolutions to the hardest and most concerning Questions. So that matters have been brought to this passe, that if a man amongst his Sonnes had any blind, or disfigured, he laid him aside for the

Miniſtery, and ſuch an one was preſently approved; as having a *mortified Countenance*. In ſhort, it was a fierie Furnace, that often approved Droſſe, and rejected Gold. But thanks be to God, thoſe *Spirituall Wickedneſſes* are now diſcharged from *their high places*. Hence it was, that many ruſhed into the Miniſtery, as being the onely Calling that they could profeſs, without ſerving an Apprentiſhip. Hence alſo we had thoſe that could Preach Sermons, but not Defend them. The reaſon of which is clear, becauſe the Works and VVritings of Learned men might be borrowed, but not the Abilities. Had indeed the Old Levititall Hierarchy ſtill continued, in which it was part of the Miniſterial Office to flay the Sacrifices, to cleanſe the Veſſels, to ſcoure the Fleſh-forks, to ſweep the Temple, and carry the filth and rubbiſh to the Brook *Kidron*, no perſons living had been fitter for the Miniſtery, and to ſerve in this nature at the Altar. But ſince it is made a labour of the mind; as to inform mens judgements, and move their affections, to reſolve difficult places of Scripture, to decide and clear off Controverſies, I cannot ſee how to be a Butcher, Scavinger, or any other ſuch Trade, does at all qualifie, or prepare men for this work. But as unfit as they were, yet to clear away for ſuch into the Miniſtery, wee have had almoſt all Sermons full of gibes and ſcoffs at Humane Learning. Away with *vain Philoſophy, with the diſputer*

ter of this world, and the enticing word of mans wiſdome, and ſet up the *fooliſhneſſe of Preaching*, *the ſimplicity of the Goſpel*: Thus Divinity has been brought in upon the ruines of Humanity; by forcing the VVords of the Scripture from the ſenſe and then haling them to the worſt of Drudgeries, to ſet a *Jus Divinum* upon Ignorance and perfection, and recommend Naturall VVeakneſs for Supernaturall Grace. Hereupon the Ignorant have took heart to venture upon this great Calling,& inſtead of cutting their way to it,according to the uſual courſe, through the knowledge of the *tongues*,the Study of Philoſophy Schole-divinity, the Fathers and Councils, they have taken another, and a ſhorter Cut, and having read perhaps a Treatiſe or two *upon the heart*, *the bruiſed Reed*, *the Crums of Comfort*, *Wollebius in Engliſh*, and ſome ſuch other little Authors, the uſuall Furniture of Old VVomens Cloſets, they have ſet forth as accompliſhed Divines, and forthwith they preſent themſelves to the Service; and there has not been wanting *Jeroboams*, as willing to conſecrate, and receive them, as they to offer themſelves. And this has been one of the moſt fatall, and almoſt irrecoverable blows that has been given to the Miniſtery.

And this may ſuffice concerning the ſecond way of Embaſing Gods Miniſters; namely, by entruſting the Miniſtery with raw, unlearned, ill-bred Perſons, ſo that what *Solomon* ſpeaks of a Proverb in the mouth

mouth of a Fool, the ſame may be ſaid of the Miniſtery veſted in them, that it is like a *Pearle in a ſwines ſnout.*

I proceed now to the ſecond thing propoſed in the Diſcuſſion of this Doctrine, which is to ſhew, how the Embaſing of the Miniſters tends to the deſtruction of Religion.

This it does two wayes.

1. Becauſe it brings them under exceeding ſcorn and contempt; and then let none think Religion it ſelf ſecure: For the Vulgar have not ſuch Logicall heads as to be able to abſtract; ſuch ſubtile conceptions, as to ſeparate the Man from the Miniſter, or to conſider the ſame perſon under a double capacity, and ſo honour him as a Divine, while they deſpiſe him as poor. But ſuppoſe they could, yet Actions cannot diſtinguiſh as Conceptions doe, and therefore every Act of Contempt ſtrikes both, and unavoydably wounds the Miniſtery through the ſides of the Miniſter. And wee muſt know, that the leaſt degree of Contempt weakens Religion, becauſe it is abſolutely contrary to the nature of it, Religion properly conſiſting in a reverentiall eſteem of things Sacred. Now that which in any meaſure weakens Religion will at length deſtroy it: For the weakening of a thing is onely a partiall deſtruction of it. Poverty and meaneſſe of condition expoſes the Wiſeſt to ſcorn; it being naturall for men to place their eſteem, rather upon things

Great

Great than Good; and the Poet obſerves that this *Infelix Paupertas* has nothing in it more intolerable than this, that it renders men Ridiculous. And then how eaſie and naturall it is for Contempt to paſſe from the Perſon to the Office, from him that ſpeaks, to the thing that he ſpeaks of, Experience proves. Counſell being ſeldome valued ſo much for the Truth of the thing, as the Credit of him that gives it. Obſerve an excellent paſſage to this purpoſe in the 9 *Eccl.* 14. 15. We have an account of a little City with few men in it, beſieged by a Great and Potent King, and in the 15. *v.* we read, that *there was found in it a poor Wiſe man, and he by his Wiſdome delivered the City.* A worthy ſervice indeed, and certainly we may expect that ſome honourable Recompence ſhould follow it; a Deliverer of his Country, and that in ſuch diſtreſſe, could not but be advanced: but we find a contrary event in the next words of the ſame verſe, *Yet none remembred that ſame poor man?* why? what ſhould be the reaſon? Was he not a man of parts and Wiſdome? and is not VViſdome honourable? Yes, but *he was poor*: But was he not alſo ſuccesfull as well as wiſe? True; but ſtill *he was poor*: And once grant this, and you cannot keep off that unavoydable ſequel in the next verſe, *The poor mans wiſdome is deſpiſed, and his words are not heard.* VVee may believe it upon *Solomons* word, who was Rich, as well as wiſe, and therefore knew the force of both: and probably had it not been for his Riches, the Queen

of *Sheba* would never have came ſo farre onely to have heard his VViſdome. Obſerve her behaviour when ſhe came. Though upon the hearing of *Solomons* Wiſdome, and the reſolution of her hard Queſtions ſhe expreſſed a juſt admiration, yet when *Solomon* afterward ſhew her his Palace, his Treaſures, and the Temple which hee had built, 1 *King.* 10. *c.* 5. *v.* it is ſaid, *there was no more ſpirit in her.* VVhat was the cauſe of this? certainly the magnificence, the pomp and ſplendour of ſuch a Structure: it ſtruck her into an Extaſy beyond his wiſe Anſwers. She eſteemed this as much above his VViſdome, as Aſtoniſhment is beyond bare Admiration. She admired his VViſdome, but ſhe adored his Magnificence. So apt is the mind, even of wiſe perſons, to be ſurpriſed with the ſuperficies, or circumſtance of things, and value, or undervalue Spirituals, according to the manner of their Externall Appearance. When Circumſtances faile, the ſubſtance ſeldome long ſurvives; Cloathes are no part of the Body, yet take away cloathes, and the Body will dye. *Livy* obſerves of *Romulus*, that being to give Laws to his new Romans, he found no better way to procure an eſteem and reverence to them, then by firſt procuring it to himſelf, by ſplendour of Habit and Retinue, and other ſignes of Royalty. And the wiſe *Numa*, his ſucceſſor took the ſame courſe to enforce his Religious Laws, namely, by giving the ſame Pomp to the Prieſt who was to diſpenſe them. *Sacerdotem creavit, inſigni-*

qui

que eum Veſte, & Curuli Regiâ ſellâ adornavit. That is, he adorned him with a rich Robe, and a royall Chair of State. And in our Judicatures take away the Trumpet, the Scarlet, the Attendance, and the Lordſhip, which would be to make Juſtice Naked, as well as Blind, the Law would loſe much of its Terror, and conſequently of its Authority. Let the Miniſter be abject and low, his intereſt inconſiderable, the Word will ſuffer for his ſake: The Meſſage will ſtill find reception according to the Dignity of the Meſſenger. Imagine an Ambaſſadour preſenting himſelfe in a poor freeze Jerkin, and tattered cloaths, certainly he would have but ſmall Audience, his Embaſy would ſpeed rather according to the weakneſs of him that brought, than the Majeſty of him that ſent it. It will fare alike with the Ambaſſadours of Chriſt, the People will give them Audience according to their Preſence. A notable example of which we have in the Behaviour of ſome to *Paul* himſelfe, 1 *Cor.* 10.c. 10.v. Hence in the Jewiſh Church it was cautiouſly provided in the Law, that none that was *blind* or *lame*, or had any remarkable defect in his body, was capable of the Prieſtly Office: becauſe theſe things naturally make a perſon contemned, and this preſently reflects upon the Function. This therefore is the firſt way by which the low, deſpiſed condition of the Miniſters, tends to the deſtruction of the miniſtery and Religion: namely, becauſe it ſubjectes their perſons to ſcorne,

wits engaged to her ſervice by ſuitable preferments? and what ſtrength do we think would that give to the True Religion that is able thus to eſtabliſh a Falſe? Religion in a great meaſure ſtands or falls according to the abilities of thoſe that aſſert it: And if as ſome obſerve, mens *deſires* are uſually as large as their Abilities, what courſe have we took to allure the former, that we might engage the latter to our *aſſiſtance*? But we have took all wayes to affright & diſcourage *Schollars* from looking towards this *ſacred calling*: For will men lay out their *Wit* and *Judgment*, upon that employment, for the undertaking of which, both will be queſtioned? would men not long ſince have ſpent toylſome daies & watchful nights in the laborious *queſt* of *knowledge* preparative to this work, at length to come & dance attendance for approbation from a *Junto* of petty *Tyrants*, acted by Party & Prejudice, who denyed Fitneſs from Learning, and Grace from Morality? will a man exhauſt his livelihood upon *Books*, and his Health, the beſt part of his life upon *Study*, to be at length thruſt into a *poor Village*, where he ſhall have his due precariouſly, and entreat for his own, and when he has it, live *poorly* and *contemptibly* upon it, while the ſame or leſs labour beſtowed upon any other calling, would bring not only comfort but ſplendor, not only maintenance but abundance? 'Tis I confeſs the duty of Miniſters to endure this condition: but neither Religion nor Reaſon does oblige either them to approve, or others to chooſe it. Doubtleſs Parents

and consequently their Calling: and it is not imaginable that men will be brought to obey what they cannot Esteem.

2. The second way by which it tends to the ruine of the Ministery is, because it discourages men of fit and raised Abilities from undertaking it. And certaine it is, that as the Calling dignifies the man, so the man much more advances his Calling. As a Garment, though it warms the Body, it has a returne with an advantage, being much more warmed by it. And how often a good cause may miscarry without a wise mannager; & the Faith for want of a Defender, is, or at least may be known. 'Tis not the Truth of an Assertion, but the Disputant that keeps of a baffle; not the Justnesse of a Cause, but the Valour of the Souldiers that must winne the Field: When a Learned *Paul* was converted, and undertook the Ministery, it stopp'd the mouths of those that said, None but poor, weak Fisher-men Preached Christianity, and so his Learning silenced the scandall, as well as strengthned the Church. Religion placed in a soul of exquisite knowledge & abilities, as in a Castle, finds not only habitation but defence. And what a learned Forrein Divine said of the English Preaching, may be said of all, *Plus est in Artifice quam in Arte.* So much of moment is there in the Professors of any thing, to depress or raise the Profession. What is it that kept the Church of *Rome* strong, athletick, and flourishing for so many *centuries*, but the happy succession of the choicest

wits

will not throw away the towardneſs of a *child*, & the expence of Education upon a Profeſſion whoſe labour is encreaſed, & whoſe rewards vaniſhed. To condemn promiſing lively parts to contempt, & penury in a deſpiſed *calling*. What is it elſe but the caſting of a *Moſes* into the mud, or to offer a *Son* upon the *Altar*: and inſtead of a *Prieſt* to make him a *Sacrifice*. Neither let any here reply, that it becomes not a *Miniſterial ſpirit* to undertake ſuch a *calling* for reward? for they muſt know, that it is one thing to *undertake* it for a *reward*, & not to be willing to undertake it without one: it is one thing to perform *good works* only that we may receive the recompence of them in Heaven, and another thing not to be willing to follow Chriſt & forſake the world if there were no ſuch recompence. But beſides, ſuppoſe it were the duty of *Scholars* to chooſe this *calling* in the midſt of all its *diſcouragements*. Yet a prudent governour, who knows it to be his *wiſdom* as well as his *duty*, to take the beſt courſe to advance Religion, will not conſider mens duty, but their practice: not what they ought to do, but what they uſe to do: and therefore draw over the beſt qualified to this *ſervice*, by ſuch ways, as are moſt apt to perſwade & induce men. *Solomon* built his Temple with the *Talleſt Cedars:* and ſurely when God refuſed the *defective*, & the *maimed* for *ſacrifice*, we cannot think that he requires them for the *Prieſthood*. when *learning*, *abilities* & what is excellent in the world forſake the Church, we may eaſily foretel its ruine without the gift of Pro-

pheſy

phesy, And when *ignorance* succeeds in the place of *learning*, *weakness* in the room of *judgment*, we may be sure, *Heresie* & *Confusion* will quickly come in the room of *Religion*. For undoubtedly there is no way so effectual to betray the Truth, as to procure it a weake Defender.

Well: now instead of raising any particular Uses from the Point, that has been delivered, let us make a brief Recapitulation of the whole. Government, we see depends upon Religion, & Religion upon the Encouragement of those that are to dispence, and assert it. For the further Evidence of which truths we need not travell beyond our own Borders; but leave it to every one impartially to Judge, whether from the very first day that our Religion was unsettled, and Church-Government flung out of doors, the Civil Government has ever been able to fix upon a sure foundation. we have been changing even to a Proverb. The *indignation of Heaven* has been rolling & turning us from one form to another, till at length such a giddiness seised upon *government*, that it fell into the very dregs of Sectaries, that threatned an equal ruine both to *Minister* & *Magistrate*. And how the State has Sympathized with the Church, is apparent. For have not our *Princes* as well as our *Priests* been of the lowest of the People? Have not *Coblers*, *Draymen*, Mechanicks *governed*, as well as *Preached*? Nay have not they by *Preaching* come to *Govern*? was ever that of *Solomon* more verified, *that Servants have Rid while Princes and Nobles have gone on Foot*? But God has been pleased

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pleaſed by a *miracle* of mercy to diſſipate this confuſion and Chaos, & to give us ſome openings, ſome dawnings of *liberty* & *ſettlement*. But now let not thoſe that are to rebuild our *Jeruſalem*, think that the *Temple* muſt be built laſt. For if there be ſuch a thing as a God, & a *Religion*, as, whether men believe it or no, they will one day find & feel, aſſuredly he will ſtop our *Liberty*, till we reſtore him his worſhip. Beſides it is a ſenceleſs thing in reaſon, to think that one of theſe intereſts can ſtand without the other, when in the very order of Natural cauſes, *Government* is preſerved by *Religion*. But to return to *Jeroboam* with whom we firſt began. He laid the foundation of his Government in deſtroying, though doubtleſs he coloured it with the name of *Reforming* Gods worſhip: but ſee the iſſue. Conſider him [illegible] by God; maintaining his *uſurped title*, by continual vexatious warrs againſt the Kings of Judah; ſmote in his *poſterity*, which was made like the dung upon the face of the Earth, as low and vile as thoſe *Prieſts* whom he had employed. Conſider him branded, and made odious to all after ages. And now when his Kingdome & glory was at an end; and he and his Poſterity rotting under ground, and his Name ſtinking above it: Judge what a worthy prize he made in getting of a Kingdom, by deſtroying the Church. Wherefore the ſumm of all is this; to adviſe and deſire thoſe whom it may concern, to conſider *Jeroboams* puniſhment, and then they will have little heart to *Jeroboams* ſin.

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